

BRAVE JUSTICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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A MESSAGE FROM DISTRICT ATTORNEY **MELINDA KATZ**

In six years of service as Queens County District Attorney, I have ensured that the priorities of this office are shaped by experience, data and daily engagement with the people of this borough, the nation's most diverse county. Throughout this time, we have advanced a balanced approach to prosecution — one that emphasizes accountability, fairness and community trust. We do this while responding to rising caseloads and increasingly complex criminal cases.

I am proud of the progress we have made on behalf of Queens residents.

This annual report provides an overview of the office's work during the past year and highlights what we have accomplished to maintain safer communities and a fairer system of justice. Through detailed data and case outcomes, the report illustrates how the office fulfills its core responsibilities amid increasing operational demands.

We removed hundreds of illegal firearms and large quantities of narcotics from our streets, held violent and repeat offenders accountable, dismantled gang networks, prioritized illegal cannabis shutdowns, combatted retail theft, supported survivors of domestic violence and sex trafficking, and restored homes to their rightful owners.

At the same time, we are meeting the young people of this borough in classrooms, playgrounds and during after-school activities. It is through early intervention that our children see that there are mentors, educators and law enforcement figures who care deeply about their future. By combining enforcement with engagement, we are helping to build pathways away from violence and toward stability.

The accomplishments detailed in this report are the result of the dedication and expertise of an exceptional leadership team and a highly trained staff of Assistant District Attorneys and support staff who are held to the highest ethical standards. Their work has earned national recognition across a wide range of complex and emerging areas of criminal law.

As we look ahead, I remain steadfast in my commitment to justice, fairness, and public safety, and I am grateful for the continued partnership and support of our local and state legislators. Together, we can continue to advance policies and practices that promote accountability, equity, and safer communities for all who call Queens home.

In friendship,



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The seventh edition of the *Brave Justice Annual Report* chronicles the work and accomplishments of the Queens District Attorney's Office (QDA) during 2025. The report reflects an office that is dedicated to effective and thoughtful law enforcement, while sustaining the trust of the communities it serves.

Since District Attorney Katz first took office in 2020 – during a period of profound challenge for Queens, New York City, and the nation – the responsibilities of the office have continued to intensify. Under her leadership, QDA's staff has remained resilient and mission driven in the face of an increasingly demanding workload. In 2025, the office continued to advance public safety by focusing on drivers of crime, removing hundreds of illegal and dangerous weapons from our streets, returning stolen homes to their rightful owners, obtaining justice for homicide victims, holding fraudsters accountable and supporting survivors of domestic violence and sex trafficking. Central to this work is a commitment to transparency, community engagement and collaboration, as we strengthened partnerships between law enforcement and the public we serve across the most diverse county in the nation.

In 2025, the office processed a record number of arrests and arraignments. We reviewed more than 2 million discovery files, assisted 4,976 victims, and resolved 44,468 cases. (pgs 10-11) There was a decrease in the number of shooting incidents, down 25 percent in the borough, as we worked tirelessly to remove illegal firearms from our communities. In 2025, Queens had a greater decrease in the number of shooting victims, down by 25 percent, as compared to a 22 percent decrease citywide. (pg 22)

Among more than 45,000 arraignments conducted this year, examples of noteworthy cases include:

- The **largest single gang takedown in the history of Queens County** following a long-term investigation into gang violence in Southeast Queens, led by this office and the NYPD's Gun Violence Suppression Division. A total of 32 reputed members of the Bad-Co Ballout gang were indicted for their respective alleged roles in carrying out **at least 13 shootings** – including three homicides – often in broad daylight, near parks, public schools and residential areas. The gang was based in Queens Village, which was referred to by members as “Shadyville.” (pg. 29)
- The shutdown of a **gun trafficking ring from Georgia to Southeast Queens** through a 194-count grand jury indictment against two defendants. The duo was accused of purchasing deadly weapons down south and transporting them to Queens to sell in our neighborhoods. More than 70 firearms, ammunition and drugs were recovered during the six-month joint investigation with our partners at the NYPD and Homeland Security Investigations New York. (pg. 35)
- For the second time in two years, DA Katz was joined by Governor Kathy Hochul in announcing the **takedown of a large-scale retail theft operation**. Thirteen individuals were charged in a 780-count indictment with stealing more than \$2.2 million from Home Depot stores across nine different states.
 - The defendants systematically and repeatedly stole merchandise from 128 Home Depot stores as part of 319 individual thefts. Some locations were hit up to four times on the same day. Each of the alleged crew members faces a potential maximum sentence of 15 or 25 years in prison, depending on their involvement. (pg. 43)

- The **successful prosecution of a defendant who was found guilty of killing Captain Alison Russo of the FDNY EMS in an unprovoked knife attack** that took place steps away from her Astoria stationhouse in September 2022. He was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison following a jury conviction. **(pg. 28)**
- DA Katz, the New York City Chief Medical Examiner and U.S. Representative Grace Meng hosted the **first Queens Missing Persons Day event** which provided personal assistance to families and friends with missing loved ones.
 - In 2025, the Cold Case Unit identified two male homicide victims, whose identity had remained unknown for more than three decades. **(pg. 30)**
- The sentencing of a John Doe defendant – who has used multiple aliases – to 4 1/2 years to 9 years in prison for stealing three homes in Queens. The defendant was arrested in March under the name of Carl Avinger for his role in an **ongoing deed fraud scheme**. News of the case, which generated media coverage, reached the real Carl Avinger in Tennessee and the identity theft victim came forward to the Queens District Attorney's Office.
 - The defendant was subsequently charged and pleaded guilty to identity theft and was sentenced to 3 1/2 years to 7 years for that matter.
 - Three co-defendants have also pleaded guilty for their roles in the deed theft scheme. **(pg. 44)**
- In 2025, the office continued to collaborate with the NYPD and the NYC Sheriff's office to **combat illegal cannabis dispensaries and storefronts** that plague our communities and sell unregulated and untested cannabis flower and gummies packaged to look like brand-name candy.
 - Since November 2022, the enforcement operations have resulted in the prosecution of 452 individuals for felony-level charges related to the sale and/or possession of cannabis or controlled substances in Queens County.
 - Since July 2024, 320 illegal cannabis shops have been padlocked and permanently closed throughout the borough. **(pg. 45)**

The office continued to operate the **Queens Merchants Business Improvement Program**, where participating businesses are empowered to contact the police when an individual engages in disruptive, dangerous, or illegal behavior inside their establishment. The responding officers can issue a trespass notice as a warning to the individual not to return to the location or risk being arrested.

Since the expansion of the program to every precinct in Queens in 2023, a total of **446 stores** have registered for the initiative. More than **2,600 trespass notices** have been served while only **128 defendants** have been arrested for returning to the store after being served. (pg. 43)

To address **recidivism**, particularly where a defendant is rearrested for a crime that causes harm to another person or their property, DA Katz has instructed staff to request bail under Criminal Procedure Law Section 510.10(4)(t), a bail law exception more commonly known as the “harm on harm” statute.

The “harm on harm” exception allows prosecutors to recommend bail for offenses that are otherwise not bail eligible when both the defendant’s new offense and pending case involve harm to an identifiable person or property. Every arrest that comes through the office is screened to determine whether a “harm on harm” bail request is appropriate. **In 2025, we made approximately 1,800 “harm on harm” applications, and judges set bail in approximately 56 percent of such cases.** (pg. 17)

Committed to keeping our neighborhoods safe, **QDA staff are available to respond swiftly to assist law enforcement with investigative needs and to connect with victims and witnesses as early as possible.** In 2025, the requests included 159 homicide crime scene visits, 74 vehicular collision scene responses, 130 responses related to sexual assault, elder assault and child abuse, and 964 search warrants and cell site warrants prepared, of which 322 were for homicide related cases. (pg. 12)

The **Conviction Integrity Unit** was created by DA Katz on her first day in office. Since then:

- 291 cases have been submitted to CIU for review;
- **17 convictions have been vacated** based on evidence of innocence or fundamental errors;
- 93 submissions have been reviewed and closed. (pg. 52)

As part of her balanced approach to prosecution, DA Katz has implemented many policies designed to change the landscape of pretrial incarceration. Project Reset, part of DA Katz’s **Rehabilitation Programs and Restorative Services Bureau**, is utilized to engage participants prior to arraignment. Clinically trained staff work with participants to explore challenges that may have led to their misdemeanor arrest and discuss strategies to avoid future involvement with the legal system. **In 2025, this office made referrals on 556 new cases and had 333 successful completions through the Project Reset program.**

At the same time, 934 cases were referred for services under the Queens Community Justice Center and more than 1,300 defendants were recommended for community service in lieu of incarceration. (pg. 53)

DA Katz remains deeply committed to fostering strong relationships with the vibrant communities of Queens. The DA believes strongly that the first interaction with this office should happen in a welcoming,

community setting – not inside of a courtroom or during a crisis. **The Community Partnerships Division** employs a multi-faceted strategy, creating opportunities for residents to positively contribute to their communities. **Since 2020, the team has engaged in 3,463 community events, reflecting its deep commitment to public outreach. (pg. 57)**

DA Katz brought together an experienced and highly **skilled leadership team** to oversee the daily operations of the office. Under the guidance of Chief Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Naiburg and Chief of Staff Wendy Erdly, the Queens District Attorney's Office upholds the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, and integrity expected of prosecutors. In 2025, **QDA welcomed 51 new prosecutors to Queens. (pg. 68)**

In 2025, the office maintained a disciplined and results-driven focus on the underlying drivers of crime and accountability. At the same time, we have prioritized proactive engagement with young people throughout Queens, including outreach in schools, recreational settings, and after-school programs.

These initiatives are made possible through sustained collaboration with local, state, and federal legislators and law enforcement partners, community-based organizations, and the residents of this borough. By strengthening public trust and maintaining transparent lines of communication, the office remains responsive to evolving public safety challenges and accountable to the communities it serves.

55



DISTRICT ATTORNEY
MELINDA KATZ



SECTION I

CONFIDENCE IN THE SYSTEM



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SECTION I: CONFIDENCE IN THE SYSTEM

COURT ACTIVITY

As the top law enforcement official in Queens County, DA Katz is committed to tackling crime and violence while ensuring justice and fairness in the process. Her staff has seen an increasing workload this year. **2025 was a record year for numbers of arrests, arraignments, victims assisted, and cases resolved.**

60,041
ARRESTS*

*NYPD DATA FOR 2025

45,338
ARRAIGNMENTS CONDUCTED*

*CASES WITH AN INITIAL ARRAIGNMENT DATE IN CRIMINAL COURT
AND DIRECT INDICTMENTS WITH AN INITIAL ARRAIGNMENT DATE IN SUPREME COURT.

GRAND JURY PRESENTMENTS

In the criminal justice system, a grand jury indictment is needed for felony charges to proceed to trial. Under DA Katz's leadership, her office is focused on addressing crime and violence while ensuring fairness in the process.

INDICTMENTS	2025
CASES	1,683
DEFENDANTS	2,034

COURT ACTIVITY	2025
ARRESTS NYPD DATA FOR 2025	60,041
ARRAIGNMENTS CONDUCTED	45,338
GRAND JURY INDICTMENTS (CASES)	1,683
HOMICIDE RELATED INDICTMENTS	62
SUPERIOR COURT INFORMATIONS	345
DISCOVERY FILES REVIEWED <small>THIS NUMBER DOES NOT ACCOUNT FOR THE NUMBER OF DISCOVERY FILES REVIEWED VIA QDA'S SECURE FILE TRANSFER SYSTEM, THE USAGE OF WHICH INCREASED DURING 2025 IN ORDER TO SHARE LARGE DISCOVERY FILES.</small>	2,058,688
BODY WORN CAMERA VIDEOS REVIEWED	91,968
INDIVIDUALS OFFERED SERVICES FROM THE CRIME VICTIMS ADVOCATE PROGRAM	4,976
COURT APPEARANCES	
CRIMINAL COURT	213,719
SUPREME COURT	58,046
TRIALS CONDUCTED	152
DISPOSITIONS	44,468

NOTE: THE CATEGORIES ABOVE ARE ASSOCIATED WITH DIFFERENT TIME PERIODS. FOR INSTANCE, INDICTMENT YEAR AND DISPOSITION YEAR ARE BASED ON THE DATES OF INDICTMENT FILING OR DISPOSITION. SO, ONE SHOULD NOT INFER, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE NUMBER OF ARRAIGNMENTS REPRESENTS THE VERY SAME CASES THAT WERE INDICTED OR DISPOSED.

SECTION I: CONFIDENCE IN THE SYSTEM

TRACKING CRIME

Consistent with citywide trends, Queens has seen decreases in robberies, burglaries, grand larcenies, and retail theft in 2025. While felony assaults have risen slightly across the city, they are down approximately seven percent in Queens. **Shooting incidents and shooting victims have decreased again this year as we work tirelessly to get guns off the streets.** As per NYPD data (12/28/25):

- Shooting incidents are down 24 percent overall in the city while Queens shootings are down 25 percent.
- While the number of shooting victims citywide has decreased 22 percent, in Queens the number has decreased 25 percent.

RIDING STATS

The office is committed to keeping our neighborhoods safe. Staff responds swiftly to assist law enforcement with investigative needs and to connect with victims and witnesses as early as possible.

159

HOMICIDE
CRIME SCENE
VISITS

130

RESPONSES RELATED
TO SEXUAL ASSAULT,
ELDER ASSAULT,
AND CHILD ABUSE

74

VEHICULAR
COLLISION SCENE
RESPONSES

964

SEARCH WARRANTS
AND CELL SITE
WARRANTS PREPARED

OF WHICH**322**

WERE FOR
HOMICIDE
RELATED CASES

HELPLINES

In addition to our 24-hour Hotline, DA Katz has established a number of helplines, including:

- Hate Crimes Helpline to report hate and bias-motivated crimes;
- Immigration Helpline to assist immigrants in navigating the criminal justice system;
- 24/7 Domestic Violence Helpline to assist in connecting individuals to safety planning measures;
- Consumer Fraud Helpline to report on scams, fraud and economic crimes;
- Elder Fraud Helpline to report the financial exploitation of seniors;
- Animal Cruelty Helpline to voice concerns as to the welfare of an animal;
- Housing and Worker Protection Helpline to report workplace safety, wage theft, predatory lending and crimes involving real estate including deed theft.

Contact information can be found on page 72.

FUNDING PER RESIDENT, ARREST, AND COURT FILING

Queens receives the least amount of funding per resident, per arrest and per court filing.

COUNTY	QUEENS COUNTY	KINGS COUNTY	NEW YORK COUNTY	BRONX COUNTY	RICHMOND COUNTY
ARRESTS*	58,559	75,890	64,551	60,036	11,230
POPULATION**	2,252,196	2,561,225	1,597,451	1,356,476	490,687
COURT FILINGS***	43,724	55,543	38,623	31,925	8,608
PS CITY FUNDS PER RESIDENT****	\$41	\$49	\$100	\$92	\$45
PS CITY FUNDS PER ARREST****	\$1,576	\$1,666	\$2,476	\$2,067	\$1,975
PS CITY FUNDS PER COURT FILING****	\$2,110	\$2,277	\$4,139	\$3,888	\$2,576

*AS PER NYPD DATA FOR 2024
 **AS PER US CENSUS BUREAU QUICKFACTS (POPULATION ESTIMATES, JULY 2023)
 *** AS PER NEW YORK STATE UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM DATA FOR 2024
 **** FY27 NOVEMBER BUDGET

SECTION I: CONFIDENCE IN THE SYSTEM

ARRESTS AND ARRAIGNMENTS

All arrests are closely evaluated to ensure appropriate and consistent charging decisions are made, consistent with DA Katz's commitment to the fair administration of justice.

ARRAIGNMENTS	2025	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
VIOLATION	976	2%
MISDEMEANOR	33,459	74%
FELONY	10,903	24%
TOTAL	45,338	100%

DECLINE TO PROSECUTE	2025		
	TOTAL CASES	DECLINE TO PROSECUTE	PERCENTAGE
VIOLATION	785	67	9%
MISDEMEANOR	32,199	1,843	6%
FELONY	22,806	831	4%
OTHER <small>*INCLUDES FUGITIVE ARRESTS</small>	570	13	2%
TOTAL	56,360	2,754	5%

TOP 5 COMPLAINT CHARGES:**PL 155.25**PETIT
LARCENY**VTL 511**OPERATION
WHILE LICENSE OR
PRIVILEGE IS SUSPENDED
OR REVOKED;
AGGRAVATED
UNLICENSED OPERATION**PL 120.00**ASSAULT
IN THE
THIRD DEGREE**PL 120.05**ASSAULT
IN THE
SECOND DEGREE**PL 215.51**CRIMINAL
CONTEMPT
IN THE
FIRST DEGREE**TOP 5 PRECINCTS FOR TOTAL ARRAIGNED CASES:****103RD
PRECINCT****109TH
PRECINCT****110TH
PRECINCT****114TH
PRECINCT****115TH
PRECINCT****2025 CASE PROCESSING AND ARRAIGNMENT TIME**

(NYPD DATA AS OF 12/31/2025)

	CITYWIDE AVERAGE	QUEENS COUNTY	KINGS COUNTY	NEW YORK COUNTY	BRONX COUNTY	RICHMOND COUNTY
ARREST TO ARRAIGNMENT	23:10 HOURS	21:58 HOURS	24:23 HOURS	23:34 HOURS	23:33 HOURS	16:41 HOURS
PERCENTAGE OF CASES ARRAIGNED WITHIN 24 HOURS	62.87%	69.08%	57.11%	61.59%	61.17%	87.96%

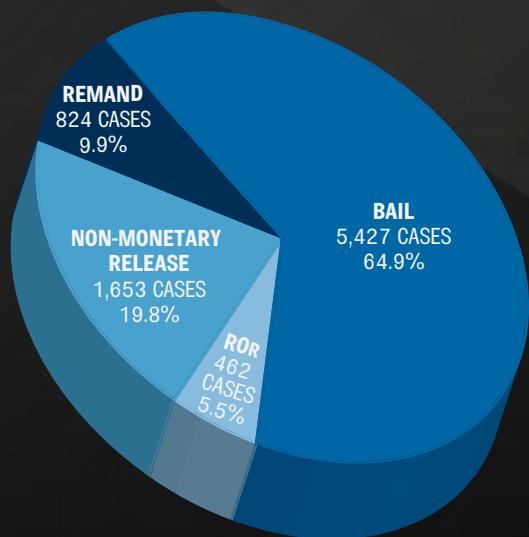
SECTION I: CONFIDENCE IN THE SYSTEM

BAIL

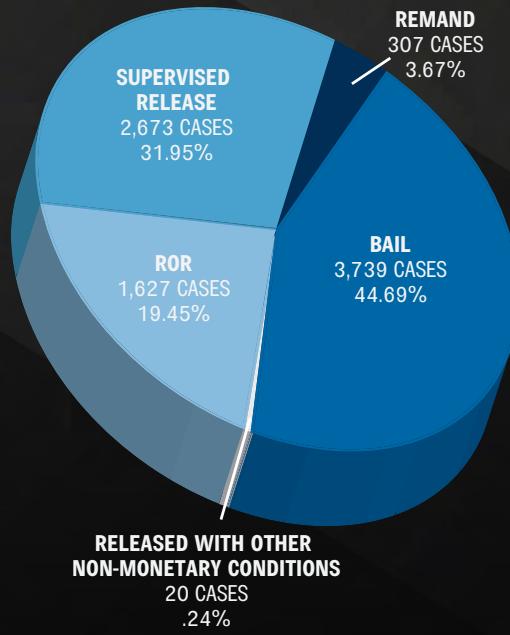
Under DA Katz's direction, we continue to assess and review every bail qualifying offense as governed by current law. From the period between January 1 through December 31, 2025, 45,338 cases were arraigned, of which at least 8,366 were bail eligible. This number consists of all cases that are bail eligible based on qualifying charges and additional cases that are bail eligible based on charges with specific conditions.

2025 SECURING ORDERS

PROSECUTOR REQUESTS



COURT ORDERS



NUMBER OF PRE-TRIAL SECURING ORDER REQUESTS MADE BY PROSECUTORS, AND DECISIONS BY THE COURT, AT INITIAL ARRAIGNMENT FOR BAIL ELIGIBLE CASES. TYPES OF RELEASES ARE AS REPORTED BY THE COURT. NON-MONETARY RELEASE INCLUDES SUPERVISED RELEASE AND ELECTRONIC MONITORING.

The District Attorney's belief is that a person's financial situation should not determine whether they are held in jail on a pending case. She envisions a criminal justice system that does not penalize the poor or favor the wealthy. To that end, all defendants are treated fairly and in a non-discriminatory way, while we are ever mindful of protecting the communities we serve.

RECIDIVISM AND BAIL

To address recidivism, particularly where a defendant is rearrested for a crime that causes harm to another person or their property, DA Katz has instructed staff to request bail under Criminal Procedure Law section 510.10(4)(t), a bail law exception more commonly known as the "harm on harm" statute. The "harm on harm" exception allows prosecutors to recommend bail for offenses that are otherwise not bail eligible when both the defendant's new offense and pending case involve harm to an identifiable person or property. Every arrest that comes through the office is screened to determine whether a "harm on harm" bail request is appropriate; in 2025, we made approximately 1,800 "harm on harm" applications, and judges set bail in approximately 56 percent of such cases.

BAIL JUMPING PROSECUTIONS

When a defendant has been released from custody or has posted bail, the court places upon the defendant a condition that they will subsequently appear in court on the required dates. When a defendant fails to appear in court, or fails to voluntarily return within 30 days thereafter, they may be additionally charged with the crime of bail jumping.

DA Katz recognizes that defendants who fail to appear to face their charges deprive victims of their day in court, delay justice and may result in no one being held accountable. There are times when a defendant willfully disregards the court's order and deliberately fails to return to court. In such cases, to disincentivize willful failures to appear, and to ensure justice is served, the office proactively files bail jumping complaints and warrants when appropriate.

In 2025, there were over 400 felony bail jumping arrests and over 800 misdemeanor bail jumping arrests in Queens County.

OVER
400
FELONY
BAIL JUMPING ARRESTS
IN QUEENS COUNTY

OVER
800
MISDEMEANOR
BAIL JUMPING ARRESTS
IN QUEENS COUNTY

SECTION I: CONFIDENCE IN THE SYSTEM

JAIL POPULATION

District Attorney Katz has implemented many policies designed to change the landscape of pretrial incarceration. Since day one, the office has been focused on reducing the jail population and breaking the cycle of crime by utilizing alternatives to incarceration, making fair and just plea agreements, and providing more opportunities for rehabilitation and redemption from past violations.

Additionally, the office painstakingly scrutinizes every request for bail. Every case is carefully reviewed to determine if remedial action can be taken to effectuate a defendant's release from Rikers Island without jeopardizing community safety. The office makes every effort to expedite incarcerated individuals' cases in conjunction with the court and the defense bar.

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025

5,800

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF
PRE-TRIAL DETAINEES
FROM ALL BOROUGHS

OF WHICH

975

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF
QUEENS PRE-TRIAL
DETAINEES

TOTAL IN JAIL FOR QUEENS RELATED MATTERS

Approximately 975 defendants continued to be held on a Queens case, with more defendants held in on bail than remand.

REMAND
390

BAIL
585

The substantial majority of those being held pre-trial were arrested for serious violent felony charges and a court determined that these individuals were at risk of not returning to court. The highest percentage of these individuals were awaiting trial for homicide, robbery, burglary, assault, and offenses involving firearms and other dangerous weapons, causing life threatening or other permanent injury as indicated in the charts below.

TOP 7 COMPLAINT CHARGES (REMAND)	APPROXIMATE PERCENT
PL 125 HOMICIDE	43%
PL 265 FIREARMS AND OTHER DANGEROUS WEAPONS	10%
PL 160 ROBBERY	10%
PL 120 ASSAULT	8%
PL 140 BURGLARY	7%
PL 130 SEX OFFENSES	5%
PL 220 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES	4%

TOP 7 COMPLAINT CHARGES (BAIL)	APPROXIMATE PERCENT
PL 160 ROBBERY	20%
PL 140 BURGLARY	15%
PL 120 ASSAULT	13%
PL 265 FIREARMS AND OTHER DANGEROUS WEAPONS	12%
PL 220 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES	10%
PL 125 HOMICIDE	9%
PL 155 LARCENY	5%



SECTION II

STRONG AND STEADY HAND



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SECTION II: STRONG AND STEADY HAND

GUN VIOLENCE

In 2025, the office continued its commitment to the Gun Violence Strategies Partnership (GVSP), a law enforcement partnership formed to tackle the surge in gun violence in our city. Each day, members of DA Katz's Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau (CSIB) join over 25 city, state and federal agencies to discuss recently arrested defendants accused of gun violence and gun possession.

Since the inception of GVSP in August of 2021, Queens has seen a dramatic decrease in shooting activity across the borough. Since DA Katz took office, the number of shooting incidents and victims has decreased over 57 percent as compared to 2020, according to data furnished by NYPD CompStat 2.0.

The Queens District Attorney's office and its law enforcement partners focus on repeat offenders and drivers of gun violence in an effort to continue to get guns off our streets and further reduce the number of shootings. GVSP operates by gathering intelligence from across agencies to strengthen cases and present the strongest arguments to hold violent criminals accountable. CSIB then analyzes this intelligence and shares it with the prosecutors and investigators to enhance each prosecution. More than half of the subjects who were identified by GVSP had prior felony convictions, and many remained in custody after arraignment.

**SHOOTINGS
DOWN**

24%
IN THE CITY

25%
IN QUEENS

DECREASE IN NUMBER OF SHOOTING VICTIMS BETWEEN 2024 AND 2025

(NYPD COMPSTAT 2.0 AS OF 12/28/2025 YTD)

25%
QUEENS COUNTY

22%
CITYWIDE

QUEENS SHOOTING INCIDENTS COMPARISON BETWEEN 2024 AND 2025

(NYPD COMPSTAT 2.0 AS OF 12/28/2025 YTD)

119
2024  **25%
DECREASE** 
89
2025

The chart below indicates the number of defendants, by age category, charged with Criminal Possession of a Weapon under Penal Law sections 265.02 and 265.03 at initial arraignment. **Defendants under the age of 26 years old account for 38 percent of all defendants charged with these crimes.**

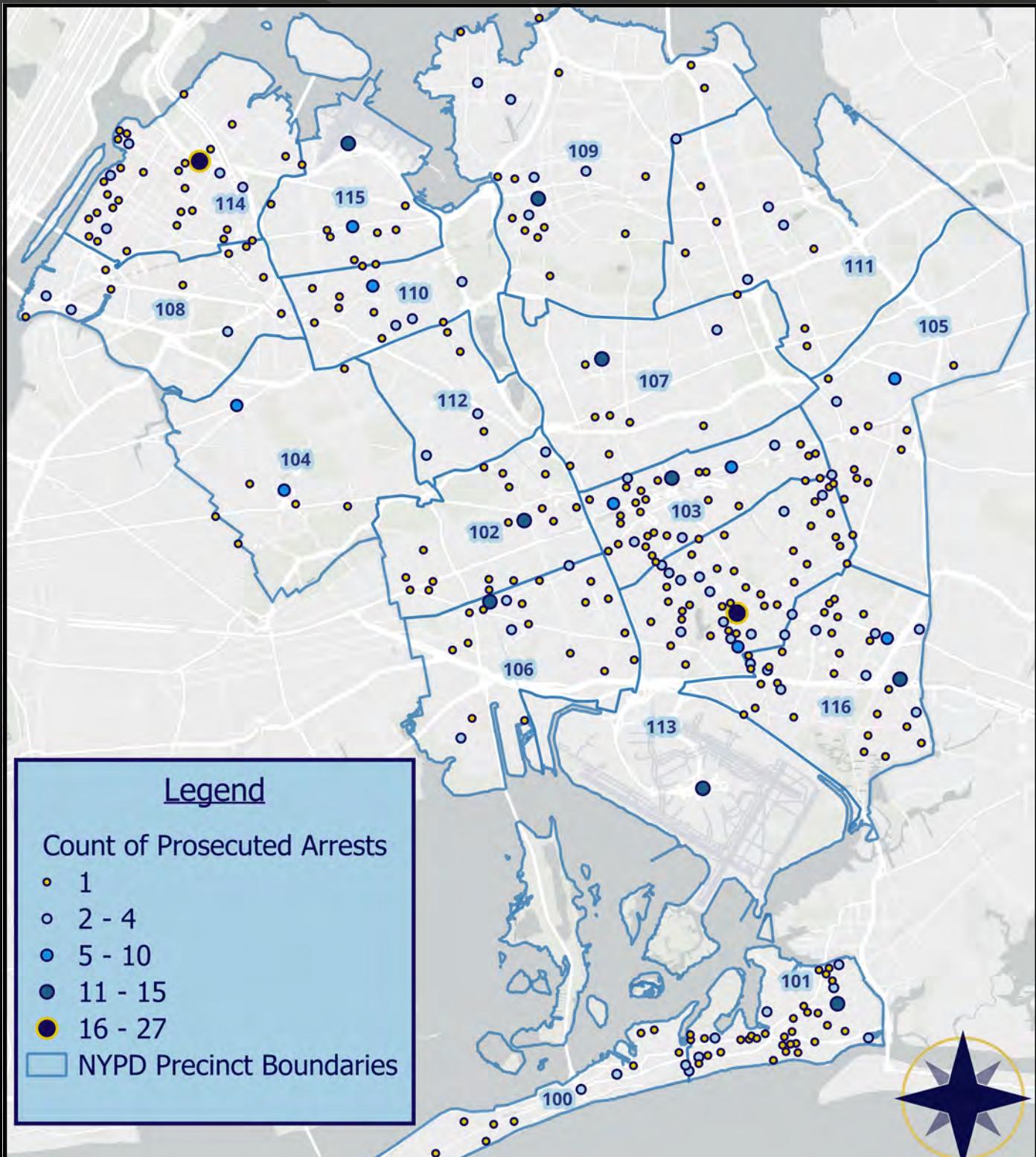
AGES OF DEFENDANTS CHARGED WITH CPW	2025	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
UNDER 18	48	8%
18-25	185	30%
26-35	165	27%
36-45	115	19%
46-55	61	10%
56-65	28	5%
OVER 65	12	2%
TOTAL	614	100%

SECTION II: STRONG AND STEADY HAND

GUN PROSECUTIONS

Since DA Katz took office in 2020, the Queens County District Attorney's Office **prosecuted over 3,500 gun cases**.

The map below depicts QDA gun prosecutions by anonymized arrest location as of December 31, 2025. Prosecutions are defined as cases involving a gun possession charge or where guns were recovered.



GUN DIVERSION PROGRAM

In March 2022, DA Katz launched the Gun Diversion Program. The office continues to pursue the drivers of gun violence while simultaneously ensuring that appropriate offenders are afforded interventions and rehabilitative services. This gun diversion initiative aims to steer those charged with gun possession into a program using a restorative approach. This program engages participants to understand the harm caused to the community and address traumas and/or community conditions leading to possession of a firearm. Participants interact with clinical professionals and culturally competent credible messengers during the 12-month-long program.

The office has reviewed 735 cases for eligibility and 39 participants enrolled in the program. To date, 29 participants successfully graduated from the program and are currently completing the remainder of their probationary sentences. The bureau works closely with the Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau to vet candidates and assessments are coordinated with The Fortune Society. Regular case conference meetings are scheduled with The Fortune Society and the Department of Probation to foster good communication and manage expectations.

GUN BUYBACK PROGRAM

Gun buybacks serve as a critical tool for reducing gun violence and promoting public safety within our communities. In partnership with the New York City Police Department, the New York State Attorney General, local community groups and neighborhood churches, the District Attorney offered members of the community the opportunity to surrender an operable firearm – no questions asked. The weapons are generally exchanged for bank cards pre-loaded with cash. These events are always completely anonymous, with no identification required. Every firearm surrendered represents a potential tragedy averted and a potential life saved. Throughout DA Katz's administration, there have been 11 gun buyback programs and over 617 firearms have been taken off the streets of Queens County.

11

GUN BUYBACK PROGRAMS

617

FIREARMS HAVE BEEN TAKEN OFF
THE STREETS OF QUEENS COUNTY



SECTION II: STRONG AND STEADY HAND

CRIME STRATEGIES AND INTELLIGENCE

In 2025, the Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau (CSIB) expanded its approach to intelligence-driven investigation and prosecution. In addition to tackling gun violence, narcotics trafficking, illegal cannabis dispensaries, multifaceted fraudulent schemes, and organized retail theft, CSIB expanded its innovative model to counterterrorism investigations, online threat assessment, and the illicit use of artificial intelligence. While it initiates investigations, CSIB has also provided valuable assistance in hundreds of cases throughout the office, analyzing social media intelligence, complex digital evidence, ballistic evidence, expert testimony and statistical data. In 2025, CSIB's Intelligence Analysts provided technical and forensic assistance in more than 500 investigations and prosecutions – more than in any previous year – including providing testimony in some of the office's highest profile cases.

CSIB is also leading the fight against ghost guns by dismantling the “Polymer Pipeline” – the source of unregulated personally made firearms that has become an ever expanding threat to public safety. Through CSIB's cutting-edge work, District Attorney Katz continues to prosecute individuals purchasing, building and 3D printing illegal firearms in Queens County.

For the fifth year in a row, the Queens District Attorney's Office led New York City in the total number of ghost gun recoveries. Since 2021, Queens County has accounted for 38 percent of all ghost guns recovered citywide, more than any other borough. Consequently, the office has emerged as a national expert in personally manufactured firearms, providing training to law enforcement agencies across the country. In 2025, CSIB conducted its 50th successful investigation of an illegal ghost gun manufacturer in Queens County – focusing its efforts on tackling the emerging threat of 3D-printed firearms.

CSIB Ghost Gun Investigations have led to the recovery of hundreds of firearms, firearm components, and lethal firearm accessories. Since May 2021, CSIB recovered:

468

TOTAL FIREARMS

303

GHOST GUNS (HANDGUNS, ASSAULT WEAPONS, MACHINE GUNS)

8

IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

1,195

HIGH-CAPACITY MAGAZINES

355

FIREARM LOWER RECEIVERS

57

SILENCERS

13

RAPID-FIRE MODIFICATION DEVICES

141,750

ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION

ROSEDALE MAN CHARGED WITH POSSESSION OF GHOST GUN CACHE FOUND AT HIS HOME

PRESS RELEASE - NOVEMBER 6, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced that a defendant has been charged with weapon possession and other crimes after an investigation led to the recovery of eight guns, including seven ghost guns and more than 100 rounds of ammunition, at the defendant's Rosedale home. The guns were allegedly made on a 3D printer inside the defendant's residence and include two assault weapons.

DA Katz said: "As alleged, the defendant amassed a significant collection of ghost guns and 3D-printed weapon parts in his Queens home, placing countless lives in danger. Those who choose to personally manufacture deadly firearms should find other, lawful ways to spend their time. Working alongside our partners in the NYPD, we will continue to investigate and prosecute the illegal production of these untraceable weapons to protect the safety of our communities."

The defendant, 22, of Rosedale, was arraigned today on a 51-count criminal complaint charging him with criminal possession of a weapon in the second, third and fourth degrees, criminal sale of a firearm in the third degree, criminal possession of a firearm, make/transport/dispose/deface weapons and dangerous instruments and unlawful possession of pistol or revolver ammunition. He faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted.

According to the charges, the District Attorney's Crime Strategies & Intelligence Bureau and the

NYPD Major Case Field Intelligence Team conducted a seven-month long investigation into the purchase of unserialized firearm components, accessories and manufacturing tools by the defendant. Such components are often used to be made into "ghost guns" and 3-D printed guns.

On Wednesday, a court-authorized search warrant was executed at the defendant's home and the following items were recovered:

- Seven completed ghost guns;
- Six 9 mm Glock style pistols with 3D-printed frames, two of which were assault weapons
- One .380-caliber Ruger with a 3D-printed fire control unit
- One .380-caliber Ruger serialized firearm
- Nine additional frames
- Two high-capacity magazines (in addition to 12 lower-capacity magazines)
- 100 rounds of 9 mm ammo
- Seven rounds .380-caliber ammo
- One 3D printer

A check of the License and Permit Systems database showed that the defendant does not hold a license to possess or own firearms in New York City and that there are no pistol permit or shotgun and rifle licenses associated with his residence.

The charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.



SECTION II: STRONG AND STEADY HAND

HOMICIDE

All homicide cases in Queens County are investigated and prosecuted by the Homicide Bureau. Assistant District Attorneys in the bureau are divided into two groups, riders and trial assistants. Riders are ADAs assigned to the riding program and they are available 24 hours a day to respond to the scene of every Queens County death by homicide, deaths caused by vehicular collisions, or any other death in which criminal conduct may have played a role. The riders also assist NYPD detectives in investigating each homicide by taking statements, interviewing witnesses, drafting search warrants and other court orders as needed. The trial assistants work together with riders, after a homicide arrest is made, to present the case to a grand jury; if an indictment is handed down, the trial assistant takes the case from there and handles the trial. The Homicide Bureau consists of two specialized units: Vehicular Homicide Unit and the Cold Case Unit.

As of December 31, 2025, homicides in Queens County were up 4.7 percent as compared to the same period in 2024.



*QDA data sourced from OCME

ASTORIA MAN SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR MURDER OF FDNY EMS CAPTAIN ALISON RUSSO

PRESS RELEASE - JUNE 30, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced today that a defendant was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison for killing Captain Alison Russo of the FDNY EMS, in an unprovoked knife attack steps away from her Astoria stationhouse in September 2022. Last month, a jury convicted the defendant of murder in the second degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree.

DA Katz said: "New York will always remember FDNY EMS Captain Alison Russo as a hero, who – for 24 years – served our city and saved countless lives. In the dark days after September 11, she worked in search and recovery efforts in Lower Manhattan. Nothing will bring Captain Russo back, but we hope that the pain and grief over her loss will lessen with today's sentencing. This defendant will now serve 25 years to life in prison for this brutal and senseless crime."

The defendant, 37, of Astoria, was convicted of murder in the second degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree during a 12-day jury trial. The jury deliberated for less than one hour before reaching a verdict. Queens Supreme Court Justice Ushir Pandit-Durant sentenced the

defendant today to 25 years to life in prison.

According to the charges and trial testimony, on September 29, 2022, at approximately 2:10 p.m., Alison Russo was in uniform and on duty as an FDNY EMS lieutenant when she left her stationhouse and walked on 41st Street. The defendant exited his apartment building, raced toward Russo and shoved her to the sidewalk. He then repeatedly plunged a kitchen knife into the 61-year-old woman's chest and abdomen.

After a standoff with police, during which the defendant refused to open his apartment door, he was arrested. A knife was recovered from the defendant's pants pocket.

Russo was taken to a nearby hospital where she was pronounced dead. She was posthumously promoted to captain.



PHOTO CREDIT: FDNY

VIOLENT CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES

The Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau works to suppress violent crime by identifying and prosecuting drivers of violence including members of street gangs, narcotics distribution operations, and firearms dealers. The bureau uses every resource available to ensure criminal networks, gang activity and other illegal organized operations are dismantled and that the drugs and weapons they sell are taken off our streets.

32 REPUTED GANG MEMBERS WERE INDICTED ON MURDER, ATTEMPTED MURDER AND CONSPIRACY CHARGES; LARGEST SINGLE GANG TAKEDOWN IN QUEENS HISTORY

PRESS RELEASE - NOVEMBER 20, 2025

District Attorney Katz and New York City Police Department Commissioner Tisch announced today that 32 reputed members of the Bad-Co Ballout gang have been indicted following a yearlong investigation into multiple shootings and homicides in Southeast Queens dating back to 2021. It was the largest single gang takedown in the history of the DA's office.

The defendants are variously charged in a 97-count indictment with murder, attempted murder, weapon possession, conspiracy and other crimes. The gang is allegedly responsible for carrying out at least 13 shootings often in broad daylight.

DA Katz said: "As alleged, the members of Bad-Co have operated as a ruthless gang in Queens for the past four years and are now considered the most violent in the borough. They terrorized rivals, and harmed innocent bystanders, to maintain and expand their geographic dominance. Tragically, three people were murdered due to this gang's indiscriminate violence. We will not relent in our work to dismantle gangs in this borough. Seventeen



firearms were seized during this investigation, and I commend the prosecutors in my Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau and our NYPD partners for their work to suppress gun and gang violence in our borough."

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the indictment and investigation, the objective of reputed gang members was to kill their rivals and establish geographic dominance.

The charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

REPUTED GANG MEMBER SENTENCED TO 21 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SHOOTING TEEN OUTSIDE SPRINGFIELD GARDENS FAST FOOD RESTAURANT

PRESS RELEASE - JULY 30, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced today that a defendant was sentenced to 21 years in prison for killing an 18-year-old in September 2024. The defendant, reputedly a BG4 gang member, fired multiple gunshots at a vehicle with four people inside including the victim. The defendant pleaded guilty earlier this month to manslaughter in the first degree.

DA Katz said: "This defendant indiscriminately fired into a car filled with people, killing the victim who had just celebrated his 18th birthday. I thank members of my Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau for building a strong case against this defendant, leading to a guilty plea. We hope today's sentencing brings a measure of closure to

the victim's loved ones."

The defendant, 19, of Springfield Gardens, pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the first degree and was sentenced today to 21 years in prison followed by five years of post-release supervision.

According to the charges, on September 27, 2024, the defendant was outside a Springfield Gardens McDonald's. A Nissan Altima with four males inside, including the 18-year-old passenger, was in the restaurant's parking lot. The defendant pointed a firearm and shot at the vehicle approximately three times.

The victim sustained a single gunshot to the back of the head and died hours later.

SECTION II: STRONG AND STEADY HAND

COLD CASE UNIT

The Cold Case Unit is the first unit ever in Queens County dedicated entirely to investigating and solving the borough's oldest and most challenging unsolved homicide cases. The unit uses groundbreaking forensic testing and cutting-edge investigative techniques to examine unsolved crimes to bring long-awaited justice to victims and their families.

This year, the unit identified two male homicide victims, whose identity had remained unknown for more than three decades. As part of the Cold Case Unit's ongoing effort to restore the identities of all unidentified homicide victims, members of the Queens District Attorney's Office Cold Case Unit and the New York City Police Department (NYPD) recently revisited these cases to uncover new leads.

First, 42-year-old Charles Alexander Cannon was identified using fingerprint analysis and a genealogy investigation. On March 16, 1994, an unidentified male was found shot to death at Andrews Avenue and 56th Street in Maspeth. During the review, a fingerprint card belonging to the deceased was discovered among the original case files. The fingerprints were submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for comparison with hope of uncovering the victim's true identity.

The FBI's examination produced a promising lead, suggesting the individual may be Charles Alexander Cannon. Traditional investigative inquiries did not produce any family members or close friends of the deceased. A genealogy investigation was conducted by the Cold Case Unit which uncovered family members of the deceased, who then officially identified Charles Alexander Cannon via photographs.

Second, an 18-year-old was identified through investigative forensic genealogy. On April 7, 1990, a male victim was found on the sidewalk opposite St. Paul the Apostle Rectory in Corona. A genealogy investigation was conducted by the Cold Case Unit which led to family of the deceased, who identified the victim through a photograph.

The Cold Case Unit has identified five homicide victims since its inception.

Both of these cases remain active homicide investigations. This collaborative effort reflects the continued dedication of law enforcement agencies to bring closure to long-unresolved cases and to ensure that every victim is known, remembered and given the dignity of their name.

In 2025, the office was successfully awarded a renewal of its \$535,000 federal grant* awarded in 2022 to enhance cases and potentially resolve unsolved homicides and sexual assaults where DNA of a suspect has been identified, reducing cold cases awaiting prosecution.

Additionally, the office secured a \$500,000 grant from Department of Justice which was appropriated and sponsored by Congresswoman Grace Meng to identify human remains with DNA testing upgrades as in the above two cases. In Queens County, approximately 47 unidentified homicide victims await identification. This project will enable the unit to work with external agencies and laboratories to identify these victims and provide long-awaited answers to their families. Through the work under this grant, 21 cases have been sent out for genealogy. **We thank Congresswoman Meng and the Department of Justice for their continued support.**

*These projects were supported by Grant No. 15PBJA-24-GG-02409-DNAX and 15PBJA-24-GG-02409-DNAX awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

DA KATZ HOSTS FIRST MISSING PERSONS DAY IN QUEENS WITH NYC OCME AND US REP GRACE MENG

PRESS RELEASE - OCTOBER 28, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced the first Queens Missing Persons Day, hosted in partnership with the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) and U.S. Rep. Grace Meng on October 24.

The free event provided one-on-one assistance for families of loved ones who have been missing for 60 days or more. Attendees were able to file reports, update records and submit DNA samples to be uploaded to a national database in the hope of locating and identifying their missing person. OCME has hosted these events in the past, but Friday was the first time the event was hosted in Queens.

A total of 16 attendees, representing nine separate families, were assisted during the event. Five additional phone interviews were scheduled for families who heard about the event but were unable to travel to Queens.

DA Katz said: "My office's Cold Case Unit is investigating approximately 47 unidentified homicide victims. While these cases may have grown cold, they are never forgotten – nor are the families still searching for answers. Updating records and collecting DNA from relatives of missing persons can be the key to identifying some of these victims, and that is why we never give up. I thank Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Jason Graham and U.S. Rep. Grace Meng for partnering with us on this important effort to help bring answers and justice to those who deserve it most."

Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Jason Graham said: "Missing Persons Day exemplifies the unwavering commitment of OCME to provide answers for families and alleviate uncertainty about what happened to their loved ones. This signature initiative combines compassionate service and scientific innovation to address a widespread if often unspoken challenge. We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with D.A. Katz and Rep. Meng to reach the diverse communities of Queens in person with this effort."

U.S. Rep. Grace Meng (D-Queens) said: "This Missing Persons Day helped to ensure that families have the resources and support they need, and it gave them a chance to update records, file reports



and submit DNA samples to assist with finding and identifying their loved ones. I am proud to have secured \$500,000 to help District Attorney Katz's Cold Case Unit investigate and prosecute cold cases in our borough. Impacted families are entitled to closure and justice, no matter how long it may take. I thank D.A. Katz and the Office of Chief Medical Examiner for working to find the answers they deserve."

In 2024, the District Attorney's Cold Case Unit office received a \$500,000 grant, secured by Congresswoman Meng, for advanced DNA testing and genealogical investigations on unidentified homicide cases. Since that time, the unit has initiated

genealogy investigations for 21 cases involving unidentified human remains.

You can view active cold cases currently being handled by the District Attorney's office here: <https://queensda.org/cold-cases/>.

According to the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUS), nearly 400 individuals are officially reported as missing across New York City and 73 of those cases were reported in Queens County.

New York City Missing Persons Day has served hundreds of families and is credited with contributing to dozens of identifications of missing persons in the New York metropolitan area since its launch in 2014.

Any family member with a loved one missing for 60 days or more may reach out to the OCME for further assistance by calling (212) 323-1201.

SECTION II: STRONG AND STEADY HAND

SPECIAL VICTIMS

The investigation and prosecution of felonies involving sex crimes against children and adults, physical abuse of children and violence against the elderly are assigned to the Special Victims Bureau. Prosecutors work closely with the police to investigate and enhance the most serious and difficult felony cases prior to the arrest of suspects, as part of District Attorney Katz's "instant response" program for special victims cases.

The Queens Child Advocacy Center (QCAC) is a state-of-the-art child-focused environment where all child sexual and physical abuse cases are handled. The QCAC provides, in a single location, a dedicated multidisciplinary team who specialize in working with children. This team includes child protective and social services provided by the NYC Administration for Children's Services and Safe Horizon, a pediatrician affiliated with Cohen Children's Medical Center who has extensive training in providing care for abused children, and a squad of NYPD detectives whose sole focus is crimes against children. Working together, this team reduces the number of interviews a child must undergo and provides them with a path to healing and safety. As part of this team, the bureau has conducted 225 forensic interviews of children at the Queens Child Advocacy Center in 2025.

DOCTOR SENTENCED FOR RAPING UNCONSCIOUS ACQUAINTANCES AND SEXUALLY ABUSING HOSPITAL PATIENTS

PRESS RELEASE - AUGUST 28, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced that a defendant was sentenced to 24 years in prison, 10 years post-release supervision and a requirement to register as a sex offender after pleading guilty to multiple counts of rape and sexual abuse for assaulting acquaintances and female hospital patients. The defendant – a former gastroenterologist at New York-Presbyterian Queens – filmed the abuse of his unconscious victims in both his apartment and at the hospital.

DA Katz said: "The defendant committed a series of heinous acts against women. He did so both as a private citizen, sexually assaulting women who were his intimate partners, and as a doctor, sexually assaulting vulnerable patients who came to the hospital in need of help. As a consequence of his crimes, he will serve over two decades in prison, with 10 years of post-release supervision and must register as a sex offender, likely for the rest of his life. I am grateful to my Special Victims Bureau and the NYPD Special Victims Squad for their painstaking work on this case. It is most important to express gratitude to the brave survivor who came forward initially to report the defendant's crimes, and the other victims who helped us to make sure no other women were hurt going forward."

The defendant pleaded guilty June 30 to four counts of rape in the first degree and three counts

of sexual abuse in the first degree in satisfaction of the consolidated indictments against him. He additionally entered an Alford plea to one count of sexual abuse. Queens Supreme Court Justice Ushir Pandit-Durant sentenced him today to a determinate sentence of 24 years in prison, to be followed by 10 years post-release supervision. The defendant will be required to register as a sex offender upon his release. The defendant's ability to practice medicine has been suspended by the state.

DA Katz said that the defendant was arrested on December 27, 2022, for raping a female acquaintance at his apartment. The woman discovered videos depicting her and other women being assaulted by the doctor.

An investigation was launched by the Queens District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, working with New York-Presbyterian Queens where the defendant was employed. A search warrant executed at the defendant's home led to the seizure of numerous digital media storage devices that contained videos of him sexually abusing unconscious female hospital patients and female acquaintances.

The defendant was subsequently charged in multiple indictments with over 50-counts relating to his abuse of the victims.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

District Attorney Katz continues to expand efforts to end domestic violence and eliminate the stigma attached to being a domestic violence survivor.

The Domestic Violence Bureau works closely with Safe Horizon and our partners at the Queens Family Justice Center, including the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence. This one-stop shop provides survivors the ability to meet with Assistant District Attorneys, an NYPD Domestic Violence Prevention Officer, and access resources, including safety planning, counseling, legal assistance, housing and financial assistance.

To reinforce her message that domestic violence survivors are not alone, DA Katz hosted her third annual Domestic Violence Survivors Empowerment Luncheon at Greater Allen Cathedral in October. That same month, DA Katz hosted a clothing drive focused on workplace/interview appropriate clothing—resources that can make a real difference as victims take steps toward rebuilding their lives.

This year, district attorneys citywide received approximately \$5 million to enable each office to develop a pre-arrest program modeled after Queens County's PROACT-DV pilot program. Our program, which expanded in 2025 to cover all Queens precincts, takes a proactive approach to enhancing domestic violence prosecutions, coordinating with law enforcement at every stage, and ensuring that victims are aware of available services as soon as possible.

The bureau also participated in numerous outreach events to spread awareness as well as education and training events for law student interns and others.

Utilizing a survivor centered, risk-based approach in the analysis of domestic violence cases, the bureau reviews each individual case for nationally recognized risk factors, including a history of strangulation, threats and access to firearms. ADAs are on call 24/7 to provide support and enhance the most dangerous domestic violence cases.

The bureau also utilizes alternatives to incarceration as another means to combat intimate partner violence by partnering with the Department of Probation's Interim Probation Domestic Violence Team. This program seeks to change defendants' abusive behaviors by utilizing a trauma-informed approach that combines accountability measures with support. The office also continues to refer domestic violence defendants to the Fortune Society's Abusive Partner Intervention Program, which is the first free program offered in Queens County to address the dynamics and effects of domestic violence. These programs are designed to create lasting change and break the cycle of abuse.

QUEENS MAN AND MOTHER INDICTED FOR TARGETING EX- GIRLFRIEND FOR ATTACK

PRESS RELEASE - JUNE 11, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced that a defendant was indicted for burglary, strangulation and other crimes for attacking his ex-girlfriend and then enlisting an undercover police officer to harm her. He is accused of asking the officer to make his ex-girlfriend "a paraplegic." His mother was indicted for allegedly entering the ex-girlfriend's residence on her son's behest to intimidate the woman.

DA Katz said: "As alleged, the defendant subjected his former partner to multiple acts of domestic violence which escalated in severity. The defendant then approached an undercover officer and asked the officer to paralyze the woman. Working together with the NYPD, the suspect was

quickly arrested, and the woman and her family were moved to safety. After his arrest, the defendant allegedly enlisted his mother to break into the ex-girlfriend's home and continue the pattern of harassment. We will do everything in our power to protect survivors of intimate partner violence."

The defendant, 31, was arraigned on a 22-count indictment charging him with two counts of burglary in the first degree and strangulation in the second degree and other crimes.

The defendant's mother, 52, was arraigned on an indictment charging her with two counts of burglary in the second degree and other crimes.

The charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

SECTION II: STRONG AND STEADY HAND

CAREER CRIMINAL AND MAJOR CRIMES

The Career Criminal Major Crimes Bureau is responsible for prosecuting recidivist violent felons who, based on their extensive criminal history, are subject to enhanced sentencing. Many of these repeat offenders are charged with crimes that include gun offenses, attempted murder, robbery, burglary, assault and kidnapping. The bureau is made up of experienced trial prosecutors committed to the successful prosecution and enhanced sentencing of these offenders.

SUBWAY ATTACKER SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR ROBBERY AND ASSAULT CONVICTION IN 2022 HAMMER ATTACK ON WOMAN IN QUEENS PLAZA SUBWAY STATION

PRESS RELEASE - JULY 10, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced today that a defendant was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison for an unprovoked attack on a commuter as she entered the Queens Plaza subway station in Long Island City in 2022. The defendant approached the 57-year-old woman from behind, kicked her down the stairs and repeatedly hit her in the head with a hammer before fleeing with the victim's tote bag.

DA Katz said: "This was an unprovoked attack that caught the attention of the entire country. A 57-year-old woman was blindsided as she entered the New York City subway system and kicked down the stairs by the defendant. The defendant then repeatedly struck her in the head with a hammer and stole the woman's tote bag. I thank the survivor for testifying during this trial and bravely facing her attacker in court. Our transit system must be safe for everyone and this conviction sends a strong message that those who cause mayhem on our subways will be brought to justice."

The defendant, 61, whose last known address was in Manhattan, was convicted after a trial in April of two counts of assault in the first degree, two counts of robbery in the first degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree. The defendant was acquitted of attempted murder charges.

Queens Supreme Court Justice John Zoll

sentenced him today to 25 years to life in prison.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges and trial testimony, at approximately 11:20 p.m. on February 24, 2022, the 57-year-old victim was walking down the stairs to the Queens Plaza subway station as the defendant, who was walking with a black cane, approached her from behind. The defendant kicked the victim down the stairs, struck her on the head 13 times with a hammer and grabbed the victim's bag before fleeing.

The victim was transported to a hospital where she was treated for multiple skull fractures and underwent emergency surgery to remove the damaged portions of her skull and replace them with titanium mesh.

Investigators tracked the perpetrator's movements using video surveillance, which showed the defendant carrying the victim's bag as he walked from the subway station toward a relative's house in Long Island City.

The defendant was arrested on February 27, 2022, and a search warrant later executed on the relative's house resulted in the recovery of a hammer, a black cane and the victim's tote bag. Testing revealed a mixture of the defendant's and the victim's DNA on the hammer, and a mixture of contributors of DNA including the defendant's, on the black cane.



GUILTY

MAJOR ECONOMIC CRIMES

The Major Economic Crimes Bureau focuses on large-scale organized criminal activity that is motivated by financial gain. The bureau handles a broad array of crimes, including identity theft, bank fraud, mail theft, drug and gun trafficking, auto theft, organized retail theft, money laundering, and illegal gambling.

The Cyber Crime Unit within the Major Economic Crimes Bureau investigates and prosecutes technology-facilitated crimes against adults and children. These crimes include unique cases such as “pig butchering” - investment scams where fraudsters gain the trust of victims over time and then deceive them into investing in fake crypto assets or businesses, as well as account hacking and identity theft. The Unit also investigates and prosecutes online predatory behavior toward minors. Experienced prosecutors use all the digital and traditional tools at their disposal to delve into the virtual world we live in today and ensure justice for all victims of crime.

The bureau traces and recovers criminal proceeds so that they can be returned to crime victims and stops the perpetrators from profiting from their crimes. The bureau works in collaboration with various local, state and federal law enforcement partners to fight crime.

CYBERCRIME CREW CHARGED WITH STEALING AND RESELLING CONCERT TICKETS, INCLUDING FOR TAYLOR SWIFT'S ERAS TOUR

PRESS RELEASE - MARCH 3, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced that two individuals were arraigned for their role in the cybercrime theft of more than 900 concert tickets, many of which were for Taylor Swift's Eras Tour. The ticket URLs were allegedly stolen by two individuals working at a third-party contractor for StubHub. The stolen URLs were then emailed to two co-conspirators in Queens, who resold the tickets on StubHub, raking in more than \$600,000 in one year.

DA Katz said: “According to the charges, these defendants tried to use the popularity of Taylor Swift's concert tour and other high-profile events to profit at the expense of others. They allegedly exploited a loophole through an offshore ticket

vendor to steal tickets to the biggest concert tour of the last decade and then resold those seats for an extraordinary profit of more than \$600,000. This takedown highlights the vigilance of my office's Cybercrime and Cryptocurrency Unit as well as the importance of working with our industry partners to combat fraudulent activities and ensure the protection of consumers. I thank StubHub for alerting us to this important case and encourage any Queens resident who may have been a victim of a cybercrime to contact our Cyber Crimes team at 718-286-6673.”

The charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

TWO ALLEGED GUN TRAFFICKERS INDICTED ON WEAPONS AND DRUGS CHARGES; GUNS TRANSPORTED FROM GEORGIA TO SOUTHEAST QUEENS

PRESS RELEASE - SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

District Attorney Katz, Mayor Adams, NYPD Commissioner Tisch and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Special Agent in Charge Patel announced the arraignment of two defendants on a 194-count grand jury indictment charging them with possession and sale of illegal firearms and narcotics. An investigation with the NYPD and HSI revealed that the duo allegedly worked in concert to purchase firearms in Georgia and transport the weapons to be sold in Queens. The investigation included undercover buys of more than 70 firearms, ammunition and drugs with most of the transactions taking place in Rosedale.

DA Katz said: “As alleged, these defendants

peddled weapons and narcotics – running firearms, assault rifles and at least one ghost gun up from the South to be sold in our borough. We are determined to dismantle the Iron Pipeline that places countless lives at risk, and we will prosecute any gun traffickers who take advantage of lax gun laws in other states to bring dangerous guns into Queens County. Over the course of six months, my Major Narcotics Unit worked in close collaboration with the NYPD Detectives' JFK Task Force Unit and HSI to bring these defendants to justice.”

The charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

**SECTION II:
STRONG AND STEADY HAND**

SUPREME COURT TRIAL DIVISION

The Supreme Court Trial Division contains four Felony Trial Bureaus, as well as the Grand Jury Bureau, Felony Conferencing Bureau, Discovery Compliance Unit and the Litigation Training Unit. The division is responsible for the prosecution of much of the county's felony dockets from inception to disposition. Assistant District Attorneys investigate and present cases to the grand jury, engage in extensive motion practice, negotiate pleas and sentences, and conduct suppression hearings and trials. They also work very closely with felony problem solving courts, specifically, the Queens Drug Court, Queens Mental Health Court, Queens DWI Court, Queens Veterans Court, and Queens Judicial Diversion Court in which defendants with mental illness or substance use illnesses can be placed in community-based treatment programs in lieu of incarceration.

While the division handles a broad spectrum of felony crimes, the bulk of their cases in recent years have involved shootings and illegal gun possession.

Queens continues to lead with the highest number of gun possession trial convictions in the city



ANIMAL CRUELTY

All crimes against animals in Queens County are investigated and prosecuted by the Animal Cruelty Prosecutions Unit. At the direction of District Attorney Katz, the unit was integrated within the Domestic Violence Bureau. Ample research shows that there is a direct link between acts of cruelty to animals and violence toward humans, including family violence and other violent behavior. Beloved pets are often used by intimate partner abusers as an effective tool of power and control over their partners and children in the household.

Studies show that approximately 70 percent of domestic violence survivors with pets reported that their abuser had killed, harmed, or threatened their pets and many felt that they could not leave the abusive relationship for fear that their pets would suffer dire consequences. Animal abuse that occurs in the presence of children in the household can also contribute to the cycle of abuse.

Some of the crimes the Animal Cruelty Prosecutions Unit investigates and prosecutes include the gross neglect and abandonment of pets, the intentional abuse, injuring, torturing, and killing of wild and companion animals, and organized dogfighting and gamecock fighting. Additionally, the unit works closely with the NYPD Animal Cruelty Investigation Detective Squad and the police precinct animal liaisons and the ASPCA's team of forensic veterinarians, whose expertise is critical in determining the extent and cause of conditions, injuries, or death of animal victims.

Following convictions for animal cruelty crimes, the unit refers offenders to the NYC Department of Health Animal Abuse Registry as those offenders are required to be listed on the registry for a five-year period. Any registrant found to own or possess a companion animal while on the abuse registry is subject to an arrest for additional charges.

As part of the initiative to prevent and address crimes against animals, the unit also participates in public education and training for investigators and prosecutors and has worked to develop alternative sentencing programs geared specifically for animal abusers. The unit also partners often with the NYPD and ASPCA to host events giving free grooming, vaccinations, and pet food to the community.



PHOTO BY ASPCA

QUEENS MAN INDICTED FOR ANIMAL CRUELTY AND ARSON FOR KILLING DOG

PRESS RELEASE - SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced that a defendant was indicted for animal cruelty and other crimes for allegedly killing a pit bull before burning the body on a South Ozone Park street on July 24.

DA Katz said: "As alleged, the defendant was supposed to be caring for a family member's dog and instead subjected it to unfathomable cruelty as he killed the pit bull and then set it on fire. This dog suffered needlessly, and we have no tolerance for animal abuse in Queens County. My office will aggressively prosecute those who beat and torture defenseless animals. It is well past time that New York strengthens its animal cruelty laws to allow for the appropriate penalties for such abuse."

The defendant, 29, of Jamaica, was arraigned today on an indictment charging him with aggravated animal cruelty, arson in the fifth degree, harming a service animal in the second degree,

criminal mischief, in the second degree, criminal possession of stolen property in the third degree, reckless endangerment in the second degree and petit larceny. If convicted, he faces up to 2 1/3 to seven years in prison.

According to the charges, on July 24, an NYPD Lieutenant observed the charred remains of a dog on a South Ozone Park street.

Surveillance video showed the defendant walking into a deli at approximately 4:40 a.m. on July 24, picking up a bottle of oil and leaving allegedly without paying.

The defendant was allegedly seen on video dragging an unconscious dog by the leash. He then allegedly used the oil to douse the dog's body and set it on fire.

The charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.



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HUMAN TRAFFICKING

To combat sex and labor trafficking, the Human Trafficking Bureau (HUTB) aggressively prosecutes traffickers and all felonies involving commercial sexual exploitation and buyers of sex. While prosecutors in court work to hold offenders accountable, DA Katz and her staff are equally committed to helping their victims. HUTB implements a victim-centered and trauma-informed approach that connects survivors of trafficking to meaningful services to assist them in escaping their exploitation. The bureau provides extensive community outreach, education and information aimed toward preventing and identifying trafficking in our communities.

Human trafficking occurs in plain sight. With two major airports and a large immigrant community, Queens is especially vulnerable to human trafficking. The office's efforts are geared toward arming the community with the knowledge to identify trafficking. At the same time, we provide victims with the information necessary to seek help from our office or others.

Under DA Katz's leadership, the office works with multiple city agencies and law enforcement partners on a comprehensive approach to make sure our neighborhoods are safe, shutting down illegal premises and holding those managing illicit operations accountable. In 2025, the HUTB obtained 27 convictions; 18 of those were felony convictions which included patronizing a person for prostitution, rape, sex trafficking and labor trafficking of women and girls.

WOMAN SENTENCED FOR SEX TRAFFICKING 14-YEAR-OLD GIRL

PRESS RELEASE - JULY 16, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced that a defendant was sentenced today to 7 ½ years in prison for the sex trafficking of a child, sex trafficking by force, labor trafficking and endangering the welfare of a child. The defendant forced a 14-year-old girl to have sex for money with a 49-year-old man. The defendant also forced the victim to work shifts at a restaurant – turning over the pay to her – and to provide childcare for the defendant's children without pay.

DA Katz said: "This defendant took advantage of a child and forced the 14-year-old to engage in prostitution and work shifts at a restaurant for her own financial gain. I thank the brave teenager who came forward and gave us information to build this case and get justice. The trafficking of children – and stripping them of their dignity through forced sex and labor exploitation – is particularly sinister. If you are aware of anyone who may be trafficked, please contact our Human Trafficking Bureau at 718-286-6548."

The defendant, 30, of Rockaway Park, pleaded guilty in May to sex trafficking of a child, sex trafficking by force, labor trafficking and

endangering the welfare of a child. Queens Supreme Court Justice Peter Vallone sentenced her today to 7 ½ years in prison for each sex trafficking charge, 2 1/3 to seven years for labor trafficking and 364 days in jail for endangering the welfare of a child, to run concurrently.

The defendant's codefendant, 51, of Rockaway Park, pleaded guilty to rape in the third degree and patronizing a person for prostitution. He is expected to be sentenced July 23.

Both defendants will be required to register as sex offenders.

According to the charges, the victim came to the United States from El Salvador in September 2022 and lived with the defendant.

On December 31, 2022, the defendant forced the victim, who was then 14, to have sex with the codefendant, who was 49, in exchange for \$600.

The defendant also forced the victim to care for her children and to take over her shifts at a restaurant. The victim was ordered to give the earnings to the defendant. The defendant threatened the victim with deportation if she did not comply and often kept the child out of school.

HATE CRIMES

One of DA Katz's early initiatives was creating the Hate Crimes Bureau, becoming one of the first offices in the United States to have a bureau exclusively dedicated to preventing, investigating and prosecuting crimes motivated by a victim's race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or gender. As the "World's Borough," Queens County is home to the most diverse population in the nation. This incredible diversity is our greatest strength and makes Queens an amazing place to work and live. Our office aggressively prosecutes those who commit bias-motivated crimes to ensure that everyone benefits from our vibrant diversity.

Hate crimes are unique, in that their negative impact is inflicted not just on the targeted victims, but on our entire community. After the October 7, 2023 attack against Israel, there was a significant citywide rise in hate crimes, especially anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish crimes. Fortunately, those numbers have come down from their peak. According to NYPD data, as of December 1, 2025, citywide hate crimes are down 18 percent from the previous year, and hate crimes in Queens continue to decrease, declining an additional nine percent, after dropping 13 percent in the previous year.

Nevertheless, the number of anti-Jewish hate crimes remains too high, accounting for more than 55 percent of the total hate crimes in New York City. In response, our office held a **first of its kind, all day symposium for law enforcement dedicated to combatting anti-Jewish hate crimes**. This event, cosponsored with the Anti-Defamation League of NY/NJ, brought together experts to provide valuable information to improve the investigation and prosecution of these vile crimes. More than 100 law enforcement officials attended this event, and a recording of this training is available to assist prosecutors throughout New York.

The Hate Crimes Bureau actively combats hate-motivated offenses by working with the community to prevent these crimes and encourage reporting. Additionally, the bureau offers aid and assistance to the victims, designs innovative treatment and alternative sentencing programs for appropriate offenders, and rigorously investigates and prosecutes these cases. Further, the office operates a hate crimes helpline to report tips, answer questions and encourage community members to report these offenses. In 2025, the Hate Crimes Bureau secured 16 indictments.



SECTION III: IN THE COMMUNITY

FRAUDS

The Frauds Bureau is dedicated to catching criminals who prey on the vulnerable, exploit the elderly, line their pockets with government revenue, and anyone else who uses financial schemes to victimize the innocent. The Frauds Bureau investigates and prosecutes a wide variety of complex financial crimes utilizing a full spectrum of investigative tools to prosecute fraudsters in order to return ill-gotten funds to their rightful owners.

The Frauds Bureau maintains specialized units that provide highly trained personnel to oversee cases and provide technical expertise throughout the office.

The Elder Fraud Unit prosecutes crimes related to the financial exploitation of the elderly. In recent years, senior citizens have been targeted by a variety of scams that are particularly disturbing as they target some of our most financially vulnerable citizens. DA Katz believes education is key to prevention. The Elder Fraud Unit hosted multiple seminars throughout the year to provide information on the latest scams and frauds and tips on how to avoid being victimized. Outreach events are provided free of charge through various community groups and government agencies.

The Crimes Against Revenue Unit (CARU) is recognized as a leader in New York state for the number of cases prosecuted and for the continued effort to find those who defraud the government. CARU works to promote commercial parity and stifle the growth of the underground economy through proactive enforcement of the laws.

The Frauds Bureau also investigates and prosecutes those who look to defraud insurance companies and programs. **They work closely with both governmental agencies and insurance companies to combat people staging car accidents and faking construction site accidents.**

The Frauds Bureau often works in conjunction with other state agencies to prosecute individuals who practice without a proper license, including fake attorneys and estheticians. This crime can be especially dangerous in cases such as when an unlicensed doctor improperly performs a medical procedure causing serious harm to the unsuspecting victim.

The Frauds Bureau maintains a non-emergency Consumer Frauds Helpline that is staffed during regular business hours.

NINE DEFENDANTS CHARGED WITH DEFRAUDING DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMS

PRESS RELEASE - MAY 13, 2025

District Attorney Katz and New York State Inspector General Lang announced that nine individuals were charged with grand larceny and other crimes for allegedly stealing thousands of dollars intended to help small business owners suffering hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As alleged, the defendants individually applied for the state Empire Development Pandemic Small Business Recovery Grant Program on behalf of multiple newly created or defunct businesses. Five of the defendants were additionally accused of defrauding the federal Economic Injury Disaster Loan program.

Each applicant certified that the funds were needed to cover business expenses. Most of the

loan money the defendants received was almost immediately transferred into their personal bank accounts.

The nine defendants allegedly collected a total of approximately \$2,250,308.

DA Katz said: "These defendants are accused of intentionally exploiting the state and federal disaster relief programs through a multitude of fraudulent companies and lining their pockets with the proceeds. My office will not allow individuals to defraud our public service programs and I thank our partners at the New York State Inspector General's office and the NYPD for their work."

The charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

RETAIL THEFT

In order to combat retail theft in Queens County, District Attorney Katz and her staff have continued to develop partnerships and relationships with large and small retailers and civic associations in the community to help identify retail theft recidivists and those who engage in violent acts when conducting theft. The office also identifies, investigates and prosecutes complex organized retail theft and resale rings responsible for tens of thousands of dollars in losses.

In December 2025, District Attorney Katz and Governor Hochul announced a 780-count indictment charging 13 defendants with grand larceny, conspiracy and criminal possession of stolen property for operating a stolen goods and fencing ring that targeted Home Depot locations in New York and eight other states. Members of the Queens-based theft crew allegedly stole building supplies, power tools, smoke alarms, air conditioners, laundry detergent, paper towels and other goods in 319 documented thefts, totaling more than \$2.2 million, during a 13-month period. The defendants took breaks for lunch and dinner, sometimes hitting the same Home Depot up to four times in one day. The items were then sold to black market retailers, known as fences, who allegedly ordered specific items to be stolen and then resold those goods to consumers. The investigation was known as Operation Self Checkout.



QUEENS MERCHANTS BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Queens Merchants Business Improvement Program seeks to combat repeat shoplifting and the threats directed at customers and store staff by the handful of individuals responsible for many of these disruptions to local businesses. The initiative was created in close partnership with the New York Police Department and community stakeholders to address this reoccurring problem.

Participating businesses can contact police when an individual engages in disruptive, dangerous, or illegal behavior in their establishment. The responding officers can issue a trespass notice, either in conjunction with an arrest or in lieu of arrest, and warn the individual that their return to the location will result in their arrest.

When an individual who has been previously served with a trespass notice returns to the location, employees of the participating business do not have to wait for them to commit yet another crime in that location before the store employees can call 911 and have the defendant arrested.

Registered businesses include large chain retailers and small local businesses alike. Since the expansion of the program to every precinct in Queens County:

446

STORES ARE NOW
REGISTERED FOR THE INITIATIVE

2,641

TRESPASS NOTICES HAVE BEEN SERVED

128

DEFENDANTS HAVE BEEN
ARRESTED FOR RETURNING
TO THE STORES AFTER BEING
SERVED WITH THEIR NOTICES

SECTION III: IN THE COMMUNITY

HOUSING AND WORKER PROTECTION

The Housing and Worker Protection Bureau (HWPB) investigates and prosecutes crimes related to fraudulent real estate schemes, deed and wage theft, unsafe workplace conditions and other forms of illegal exploitation.

The HWPB's groundbreaking efforts to combat deed fraud continued in 2025, with investigations resulting in 21 deeds being returned to homeowners since the creation of the bureau in 2020. In response to the growing problem known as squatting, DA Katz has prioritized removing those who enter a home without permission. In 2025, the bureau's efforts led to the removal of squatters from a total of six houses and the properties returned to the rightful owners. Property ownership is a fundamental right and DA Katz will not allow individuals to exploit laws surrounding tenancy.

The bureau has also assisted landlords in their efforts to evict tenants who conduct illegal businesses. HWPB's work with housing courts has resulted in the eviction of eight illegal cannabis businesses and four illegal brothel operations.

21 deeds were returned

to homeowners since the creation of the bureau in 2020.

JOHN DOE DEFENDANT SENTENCED FOR STEALING THREE QUEENS COUNTY HOMES

PRESS RELEASE NOVEMBER 13, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced that a John Doe defendant – who has used multiple aliases – was sentenced to 4 ½ years to nine years in prison for stealing three homes in Queens. The defendant was arrested in March under the name Carl Avinger for his role in a deed fraud scheme. News of the case reached the real Carl Avinger in Tennessee and the identity theft victim came forward to the DA's office. The defendant was subsequently charged and pleaded guilty to identity theft

DA Katz said: "We did not give up investigating until we were able to provide justice to the actual Carl Avinger in addition to holding the man using his identity accountable for the crimes he committed. I thank my Housing and Worker Protection Bureau for their painstaking investigation into this case, unraveling of the deed fraud scheme and holding the wrongdoers accountable."

Doe, whose pedigree information is unverified, pleaded guilty in August to identity theft in the first degree and was sentenced October 1 to 3½ years to seven years in prison. He pleaded guilty in October

to grand larceny in the first and second degrees for the deed fraud scheme. He was sentenced today to 4 ½ year to nine years in prison on the first-degree count and to four to eight years on the second-degree counts, all to run concurrently with the sentence imposed October 1.

Three codefendants also pleaded guilty for their roles in the deed theft scheme.

DA Katz said that, according to the charges, Doe was accused of working with three codefendants to steal three homes from their owners. Upon arrest, the defendant submitted identification as Carl Avinger, with the "real" Carl Avinger's date of birth.

The identity theft came to light after the complainant, Carl Edward Avinger, saw news coverage. Avinger reported to authorities that the defendant resided with him in 2003 and during that time, Avinger's identification went missing.

Further investigation revealed that the defendant had been arrested 12 times and he used numerous aliases and dates of birth for each arrest.

ILLEGAL CANNABIS SHOPS

District Attorney Katz is continuing the best-in-city efforts to permanently close illegal cannabis smoke shops. The office continues to prioritize shutting the illegal shops that plague our communities and sell unregulated and untested cannabis flower and gummies packaged to look like brand-name candy which are dangerous and are targeted toward our children.

Since November 2022, joint enforcement operations led by DA Katz's Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau have resulted in the prosecution of 452 individuals for felony-level charges related to the sale and/or possession of cannabis or controlled substances in Queens County, and the initiation of dozens of eviction proceedings to permanently remove the illegal proprietors from these retail locations. Since July 2024, 320 illegal cannabis shops have been padlocked and permanently closed in Queens County. In that same time, the following items have been seized from over 450 suspected illegal cannabis dispensaries in Queens County:



- Over 15,000 lbs. of cannabis flower;
- Over 20,000 cannabis vape “pens;”
- Over 7,500 lbs. of cannabis edibles;
- Thousands of packages of “magic mushrooms;”
- All of which have an estimated value of over \$30 million.

DA KATZ ANNOUNCES PADLOCKING OF SIX ILLEGAL CANNABIS STOREFRONTS

PRESS RELEASE - AUGUST 18, 2025

District Attorney Melinda Katz announced a sweeping enforcement action against six illegal cannabis storefronts in the borough. Dubbed Operation Weed Whacker, the months-long investigation included undercover buys and resulted in the padlocking of each location, four arrests and the seizure of hundreds of pounds of illicit cannabis and tobacco products.

DA Katz said: "Illegal cannabis stores pose a threat to community safety and to the individuals who purchase their products. My office, working with our law enforcement partners, will continue to ensure compliance so that legitimate businesses can thrive and our neighbors, particularly young people, remain safe from the unregulated products sold by illegal shops. Thank you to members of my Crimes Strategies and Intelligence Bureau, Detective Bureau as well as our partners at the New York City Sheriff and the NYPD for their hard work."

Defendant A, 24, of Queens Village, was arraigned last month on a criminal complaint charging him with criminal possession of cannabis in the first degree. He faces a potential maximum of 2 1/3 to seven years in prison if convicted.

Defendant B, 32, of Woodhaven, and defendant C, 34 of Brooklyn, were arraigned August 13 on a criminal court complaint charging them with



criminal possession of cannabis in the second degree. They face a potential maximum of 1 1/3 to four years in prison if convicted.

A fourth individual received a desk appearance ticket on August 14.

The six locations that were searched and padlocked from July 16 through August 14 are Hollis Convenience at 190-12 99th Avenue in Hollis; Moonrocks at 46-06 Utopia Parkway in Flushing; No Limit at 231-01b Linden Boulevard in Cambria Heights; ZaZa Exotic (Linden Green Farms Inc.) at 231-07 Linden Boulevard in Cambria Heights; and Sunnyside Clouds at 45-03 40th Street in Sunnyside.

The charge is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

JUVENILE PROSECUTIONS

The Juvenile Prosecutions Unit serves as a resource for all cases involving juvenile offender "JO" and adolescent offender "AO" defendants throughout the office. Several attorneys are assigned to the unit, one of whom is dedicated to the Supreme Court Youth Part. They help to manage cases, streamline court processes, and better assist with the growing number of JO and AO cases in the office.

JOs are 14- to 15-year-olds charged with certain violent felonies and 13-year-olds charged with murder in the second degree. JO cases are heard in the Supreme Court Youth Part unless they are removed to Family Court. After a careful assessment of each case, the office makes a determination as to which cases it works to retain. As of December 31, 2025, the Queens District Attorney's Office handled 133 juvenile offender cases in Queens County; 63 of those were retained in the Youth Part. The crimes charged in these remaining cases include attempted murder, assault and robbery in the first degree.

Under New York's Raise the Age law, AOs are 16- and 17-year-old defendants who have been charged with committing a felony. Misdemeanor cases are sent directly to Family Court and most non-violent felony cases are removed to Family Court.

To retain a violent felony in the Supreme Court Youth Part, the judge must review the felony complaint and determine if one of the factors in the three-prong test is present. Generally, if none of the three factors are present, and there are no extraordinary circumstances to retain the case, the violent felony case is removed to Family Court.

If the Youth Judge determines the three-prong test was not met, the District Attorney may file a motion to retain the violent felony based on "extraordinary circumstances" within 30 days of the decision.

The office assesses each case and works to retain cases with the most serious allegations or defendants with an extensive history. As of December 31, 2025, the Queens District Attorney's Office handled a total of 601 Adolescent Offender cases. Of those cases, 73 were retained and prosecuted in the Youth Part.

JUVENILE OFFENDER CASES THAT WERE RETAINED IN THE YOUTH PART

33%
2024

47%
2025

ADOLESCENT OFFENDER CASES THAT WERE RETAINED IN THE YOUTH PART

10%
2024

12%
2025

VEHICULAR HOMICIDES

Within the Homicide Bureau, the Vehicular Homicide Unit thoroughly investigates all fatal crashes and, when appropriate, prosecutes offenders who cause death while behind the wheel of a motor vehicle. Too many families know the heartbreak of losing a loved one due to speeding and distracted drivers, those under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and even those who drive without a license.

The unit oversees the investigation of all deaths – whether pedestrian, cyclist or motorist – that result from contact with a motor vehicle. Our specially trained Assistant District Attorneys are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to go to the scene of collisions where there has been a fatality or serious injury. Members of the Vehicular Homicide Unit work closely with the NYPD and respond to vehicular incidents to determine who was responsible and whether someone should be charged with a crime. When criminal charges are warranted, prosecutors assigned to the Vehicular Homicide Unit handle the case from its inception through its ultimate resolution.

By holding deadly drivers accountable we can make our streets safer for pedestrians, bikers and motorists.



TEEN DRIVER SENTENCED ON MANSLAUGHTER AND ASSAULT CHARGES FOR KILLING 14-YEAR-OLD GIRL IN GRUESOME COLLISION

PRESS RELEASE - AUGUST 2, 2025

District Attorney Katz announced that an 18-year-old was sentenced to 1 1/3 to four years in prison for causing the death of a 14-year-old passenger in the BMW he was driving in 2023 when he was 16 years old. The teen's parents were previously sentenced on endangering the welfare of a child charges for giving their son access to the car when he was legally unable to drive. It marked the first time parents were convicted on such charges related to a fatal car crash in Queens and was believed to be the first prosecution of its kind in New York.

DA Katz said: "This was a landmark case where both an unlicensed teenage driver and his parents were held responsible for the teenager's deadly actions. The 16-year-old driver was operating a BMW given to him by his parents – despite having no legal authority to drive – when he crashed and killed his passenger. Even worse, months earlier, he was ticketed for driving without a license. With this sentence, the defendant – now 18 – will serve prison time for the tragic and untimely death of his passenger."

The 18-year-old pleaded guilty on May 12 to manslaughter in the second degree, assault in the second and third degrees, reckless endangerment

in the second degree, reckless driving and numerous vehicle and traffic violations.

Supreme Court Justice Michael Yavinsky today granted the defendant youthful offender status and sentenced him to 1 1/3 to four years in prison.

According to the charges, on May 17, 2023, the then 16-year-old was driving a BMW westbound on North Conduit Avenue at a speed calculated at 101 mph, with the 14-year-old in the passenger seat.

The teen lost control when attempting to change lanes and crashed into the back of a parked UPS truck. The BMW spun across the road and struck a tractor-trailer.

His passenger was ejected from the BMW into the back of the UPS truck and was pronounced dead at the scene.

The teen had a junior driver's license, which prohibited him from driving under any circumstances in New York City.

Prior to the fatal collision, witnesses from the defendant's school saw him regularly driving the same BMW and a school administrator informed the parents that their child was driving to school.

The child was ticketed in November 2022 for driving without a license and driving while using a portable electronic device.



SECTION IV

FAIR AND JUST PROCESS



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APPEALS AND SPECIAL LITIGATION DIVISION

The Appeals and Special Litigation Division is composed of the Appeals Bureau, the FOIL and Civil Litigation Unit, and the Immigration Unit.

APPEALS BUREAU

The Appeals Bureau handles all the office's post-conviction litigation, which includes primarily responding to defendants' briefs in the Appellate Division and post-conviction motions in the Supreme Court.

Some of the significant convictions that the Appeals Bureau successfully defended in 2025 include:

In *People v. Derek Sargeant*, the defendant was convicted of multiple counts of weapon possession and possession of forgery devices after the police executed a search warrant at the defendant's home in Rosedale based upon a report from a 20-year-old escort whom the defendant had engaged in a violent confrontation. At trial, on the second day of the jury's deliberations, the defendant, who was at liberty during trial, claimed to be feeling ill and asked the court to suspend deliberations until the following morning. The court dismissed the jurors early that afternoon. When the foreperson arrived at his home, however, the defendant was waiting for him in front of the house. The defendant approached the foreperson, claimed that he was innocent and being extorted, and handed the foreperson several documents related to his case, necessitating the foreperson's dismissal. Since no alternate jurors remained, the trial court proceeded with a jury of 11, finding that the defendant had forfeited his constitutional right to a jury of 12. The Court of Appeals affirmed the defendant's conviction and held, for the first time, that a defendant can forfeit his right to a 12-member jury if he or she engages in egregious conduct that affects a sworn juror after the jury has begun deliberating.

In *People v. Andrew Caballero*, the defendant was convicted in 2014 of second-degree murder and sentenced to a prison term of 25 years to life for a 1995 killing in Flushing that went unsolved until 2012. The appellate court affirmed his judgment of conviction, but the Eastern District Court granted a writ of habeas corpus and ordered the defendant's release on the ground that trial counsel was ineffective for failing to investigate potential defense witnesses. The People, however, successfully appealed that decision to the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, which reversed the District Court's order, finding that defendant's attorney had provided him with effective representation.



SEALING CONVICTIONS

A significant function of the Appeals Bureau is to respond to motions to seal convictions under section 160.59 of the Criminal Procedure Law that allows for sealing of 10-year-old, non-violent convictions under certain circumstances. Additionally, next year the Clean Slate Act will become effective and the sealing of many convictions will be automatic.

In 2025, DA Katz's decision to not object to 59 sealing applications will free these former defendants of the encumbrance of decades-old, non-violent convictions.

FOIL AND CIVIL LITIGATION UNIT

The FOIL and Civil Litigation Unit handles requests under the Freedom of Information Law and responds to inter-agency and law enforcement requests for records on specific cases as well as subpoenas for records or testimony in civil litigation.

In 2025, the unit received approximately 850 FOIL requests, inter-agency requests for records related to state or federal lawsuits, and subpoenas related to state or federal lawsuits and responded to approximately 780, providing the public and litigants in civil lawsuits with access to thousands of pages of documents, hours of NYPD body-worn camera and surveillance videos, and hundreds of 911 calls.

In 2025, the FOIL and Civil Litigation Unit received approximately

850 FOIL REQUESTS

**providing the public and litigants in civil lawsuits with
access to thousands of pages of documents.**

IMMIGRATION SPECIALIST

The changes in the federal government's treatment of noncitizens have caused an increased awareness of the interplay between criminal and immigration law. This year, the Immigration Specialist continued to provide training and consultation to Assistant District Attorneys with cases connecting to immigration. These matters include plea negotiation, post-conviction relief motions, request for prosecutorial discretion, open matters with defendants and victims detained by ICE, and keeping the office abreast of the ever-changing policies impacting noncitizens.

U- and T-visa certification requests are filed by cooperating victims of qualifying criminal activity that permit the District Attorney's Office to certify U- and T-visa certifications that are subsequently used to request a visa to remain in the United States. This year, the office saw an all-time high during the Katz administration in total applications, including follow-up requests, totaling at about 600.

SECTION IV: FAIR AND JUST PROCESS

CONVICTION INTEGRITY UNIT

The Conviction Integrity Unit (CIU) serves a critical function to ensure that our criminal justice system is fairer and more responsive to the needs of our community. The CIU reinvestigates and resolves credible claims of actual innocence, wrongful conviction, or other circumstances of a case which undermines the District Attorney's confidence in a just outcome. The work of the Conviction Integrity Unit also serves a vital law enforcement function for both victims and public safety, because if the wrong person is convicted, the actual perpetrator has not been brought to justice.

Marking five years since its establishment in 2020, the CIU is staffed by a team of experienced prosecutors, detectives, and case analysts. During its investigations, the CIU routinely collaborates with other QDA bureaus such as the Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau, the Forensic Science Unit and the Crime Victim Advocacy Program. The CIU also works closely with outside partners such as the Office of Chief Medical Examiner to conduct DNA testing and the NYPD Crime Lab to examine fingerprint and ballistics evidence.

To date, 291 individual cases have been submitted to the CIU for review. After a thorough investigation, the CIU has thus far vacated 17 convictions based on evidence pointing to innocence or other fundamental errors that had been overlooked through the ordinary judicial process. The CIU has evaluated or completed investigations of an additional 124 cases in which no further action was deemed necessary.

The CIU has vacated wrongful convictions based on the following grounds:

- Eyewitness Misidentification;
- False Confessions;
- False or Credibly Recanted Testimony by Witnesses;
- Exculpatory DNA and Fingerprint Evidence;
- Historical Cell Site Analysis; and
- Misconduct by a Prosecutor in Jury Selection.

291

TOTAL CASES SUBMITTED TO THE
CIU FOR REVIEW

17

CONVICTIONS WERE VACATED
BASED ON EVIDENCE OF
INNOCENCE OR FUNDAMENTAL ERRORS

93

SUBMISSIONS HAVE
BEEN REVIEWED AND CLOSED

REHABILITATION PROGRAMS AND RESTORATIVE SERVICES BUREAU

The Rehabilitation Programs and Restorative Services Bureau works to increase alternative dispositions and paths of diversion from jail and consists of the Diversion and Alternative Sentencing Unit and the Crime Victims Advocate Program. The bureau provides services to crime victims, witnesses, survivors, and defendants charged with criminal offenses and continues to expand its offerings, and collaborations with stakeholders and community-based organizations.

Throughout 2025, the Crime Victims Advocate Program (CVAP) has been actively involved in community events, trainings, and workshops. They are committed to raising awareness of trends in various communities and learning more about the needs of victims, witnesses, and survivors of crime. Staffed by licensed social workers, mental health counselors, advocates, and application assistants, CVAP has been proactive in providing resources to walk-in clients and they ensure that victims have access to the information and assistance they require during challenging times. CVAP advocates are called upon to accompany victims to on-site law enforcement interviews, forensic interviews and escort witnesses to court to testify during trial.



DIVERSION AND ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING UNIT

The Diversion and Alternative Sentencing Unit is responsible for managing opportunities for those arrested to participate in treatment and community-based resources.

PROJECT RESET

Project Reset, a citywide initiative and project of the Center for Justice Innovation, is utilized to engage participants prior to arraignment. Clinically trained staff work with participants to explore challenges that may have led to their misdemeanor arrest and discuss strategies to avoid future involvement with the legal system. In 2023, the bureau implemented a new daily screening and referral process with a goal to increase the number of referrals and successful participants, resulting in favorable outcomes for the participants and fewer cases on the arraignment court calendar. In 2025, we referred 556 new cases and had 333 successful completions. The average time from arrest to completion was 12.4 days for this year. Since program inception in October 2021, we have had 1,062 successful completions out of a total of 1,857 referrals.

QUEENS COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER | CENTER FOR JUSTICE INNOVATION

Our Diversion and Alternative Sentencing Unit continues to work diligently with the Criminal Court Bureau to identify cases for services, which includes a clinical assessment for needed resources and individual counseling. Our office referred 934 cases for services as of November 2025.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community service is also an integral part of the District Attorney's commitment to alternative dispositions. Through December 2025, more than 1,300 defendants were referred to community service and more than 570 defendants successfully completed their service mandates.

SECTION IV: FAIR AND JUST PROCESS

SPECIALIZED COURT PARTS AND POST-ARRAIGNMENT DIVERSION PROGRAMS

The bureau is also responsible for 10 specialized court parts and calendars involving a program disposition. The Queens County District Attorney's Office has diverted cases into programming since 1987 and formally entered into agreements with specialized court parts as they were created.

QUEENS MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Operating since 2005, the Queens Mental Health Court (QMHC) seeks to improve the wellbeing of justice involved individuals living with mental and behavioral health issues by linking them with court-supervised, community-based treatment. Its goals include improving public safety and the quality of life for people living with mental illness. As of December 2025, 88 individuals have cases pending in QMHC.

QUEENS DWI COURT (QDWI)

Queens Criminal Court DWI offers defendants with their first felony driving while intoxicated (DWI) offense the opportunity to receive treatment under close court supervision for a minimum of one year as an alternative to incarceration and/or a felony conviction. If the defendant voluntarily agrees to enter the program, they must plead guilty to both the felony and a misdemeanor DWI charge and sign a document agreeing to abide by the treatment plan and the rules of the program.

Participation in the program requires the defendant to wear a SCRAM Alcohol and Location Monitoring System bracelet for 90 days, refrain from driving, and be on interim probation for the year. If the defendant successfully completes the program the felony charged is dismissed and they are sentenced to the misdemeanor. As of December 2025, four individuals have cases pending in QDWI.

QUEENS VETERANS COURT AND QUEENS MISDEMEANOR VETERANS COURT

The Queens Veterans Court and Queens Misdemeanor Veterans Court provide treatment opportunities to people who have served our country in the armed forces. Substance misuse and mental health problems may stem from service in combat zones and can be exacerbated as veterans return to civilian life. Both the felony and misdemeanor Veterans Courts offer a solution by connecting veterans to appropriate services with mandated court supervision. District Attorney Katz worked with the NYPD to ensure we learn at the time of arrest whether the defendant served in the military. The Diversion and Alternative Sentencing Unit proactively screens NYPD paperwork and clinical information is gathered to determine the next best steps to resolve pending criminal charges when arrested persons identify as having served in the military. Through December 2025, 15 cases were pending in the Felony Veterans Treatment Court, and 26 cases were pending in the Queens Misdemeanor Veterans Court.

COLLABORATING WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The bureau works with Treatment Alternatives for Safer Communities (TASC) to facilitate specialized programming for people with substance misuse or mental health needs.

SUPREME COURT: DIVERSION AND ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING UNIT

The unit handles a revolving caseload of nearly 700 felony cases for screening, assessment, and program placement. Cases are referred from throughout the office, including the Felony Trial, Career Criminal and Major Crimes, Domestic Violence, Special Victims, Hate Crimes, Major Economic Crimes, Juvenile Prosecutions, and the Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureaus.

CRIME VICTIMS ADVOCATE PROGRAM

The Crime Victims Advocate Program offered services to individuals by providing safety planning and supportive counseling. The office's advocates also supported 71 families of homicide victims, with emotional support, connection to services and application assistance. Examples of services provided to survivors of homicide include referrals to grief counseling, group counseling, NYCHA Emergency Transfer/Section 8 and assistance with emergency funeral expenses through the Office of Victim Services.

The following chart contains data points gathered on services provided to crime victims:

CRIME VICTIMS ADVOCATE DATA	2025
INDIVIDUALS OFFERED CVAP SERVICES	4,976
CONTACTS/FOLLOW-UPS MADE	20,472
PERSONAL ADVOCACY	8,704
COUNSELING SESSIONS	4,838
HOMICIDE FAMILIES SUPPORTED	71
CAB LINE DATA	7,332

SECTION IV: FAIR AND JUST PROCESS

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION

DA Katz has indicated that the first point of contact with her office should not occur in a courtroom or during a crisis, but in a welcoming, safe environment—such as a community event—where individuals can learn about available resources and services.

To further this vision, the Community Partnerships Division employs a multi-faceted strategy, creating opportunities for residents to positively contribute to their communities while ensuring that crime is never seen as an option. The division works closely with civic and non-profit organizations, develops and sponsors programs, and engages with neighborhoods across Queens. Through these efforts, the division aims to reduce crime and promote justice for all. The division is organized into three distinct units with specific focus: Civic Awareness, Community Engagement and Youth Empowerment.

Community Partnerships participated in over
600 Public Events

CIVIC AWARENESS UNIT

The Civic Awareness Unit coordinates the District Attorney's Community Advisory Councils, oversees the Office of Immigrant Affairs, and operates all office-sponsored events, from criminal justice educational programs to cultural celebrations. To cultivate new external partnerships, the unit strategically spearheaded several initiatives in 2025 including a gun buyback program, a pet vaccination event co-hosted by the ASPCA, a clothing drive for victims of domestic violence, and community-based celebrations of Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage, Women's History, Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage, and Jewish Heritage.

The unit arranged and managed participation at several parades across Queens County, including the Lunar New Year Parade (Flushing), the New Queens Pride Parade (Jackson Heights), the Queens Breast Cancer Awareness Walk (Flushing Meadows Corona Park) as well as the Celebrate Israel Parade in Manhattan.

Additionally, the unit advanced public awareness initiatives involving criminal justice and safety issues including housing, worker protections, and cryptocurrency issues. They organized several social media campaigns to promote awareness on human trafficking, gun violence, sexual assault, and domestic violence. The unit further administers community service compliance for Assistant District Attorneys, issuing more than 430 community service credits in 2025 to recognize employee engagement.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UNIT

The Community Engagement Unit carries out DA Katz's community-centered vision of prosecution, expanding the office's visibility, accessibility, and connection with the people of Queens County. Under DA Katz's leadership, the team continues to strengthen relationships and deepen the office's presence across the borough.

The unit's community coordinators are assigned to all 14 community boards, 17 precincts, and Public Service Area 9, which includes NYCHA developments. The coordinators regularly attend precinct council meetings, civic associations, and community board sessions, ensuring the District Attorney's Office stays closely aligned with neighborhood concerns. The team also partners with a wide range of local stakeholders—including religious leaders, elected officials, district and civic representatives, precinct commanders, police officers, NYCHA tenant association leaders, the Queens Chamber of Commerce, and NYPD Community Affairs—to share important information through workshops, safety summits, presentations, and QDA's mobile office.

The unit has become a trusted point of contact for residents, serving as a direct link to the DA's Office. Community members routinely reach out with concerns and invite the District Attorney to participate in local events. Since 2020, the team has engaged in 3,463 community events, reflecting its deep commitment to public outreach.

The Community Engagement Unit continues to serve as the DA's "boots on the ground," providing an essential conduit to the voices and needs of Queens. This ongoing work embodies DA Katz's distinctive approach to community prosecution—one that is reshaping how the office interacts with the borough and redefining the standard for community involvement in Queens.



SECTION IV: FAIR AND JUST PROCESS

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT UNIT

In 2025, the Youth Empowerment Unit engaged nearly 13,230 young people across Queens County. Its initiatives were strategically designed to cultivate critical thinking and strengthen essential skills among participants. By fostering competencies, such as analytical reasoning and communication mastery, the unit's programs empower youth to navigate challenges with confidence, resilience, and maturity. This impact underscores the unit's ongoing commitment to preparing the next generation for meaningful leadership and active civic participation.

LEGAL EXPLORERS

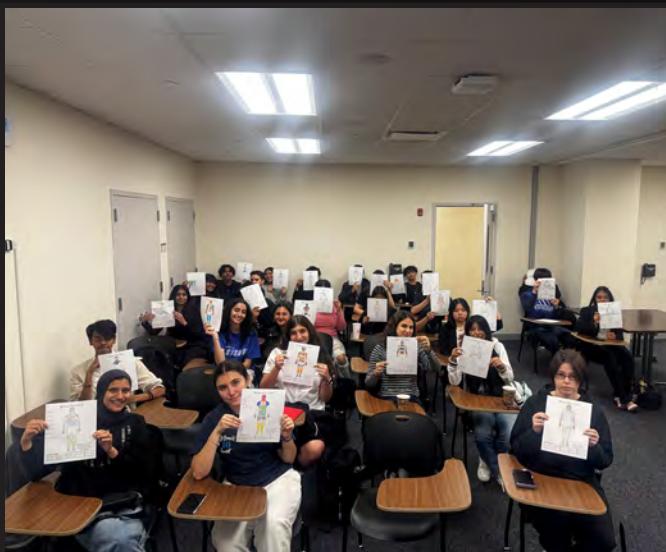
The Legal Explorers Program is designed to immerse high school students in a wide range of career paths within the legal profession, including roles such as prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, police officers, and other distinguished positions across the criminal justice system. The program seeks to ignite curiosity, inspire professional growth, and nurture a sense of wonder as participants begin to explore their future journeys.

During the 2025 academic year, the Legal Explorers Program welcomed an average of 36 participants, providing them with meaningful exposure to the diverse opportunities and responsibilities inherent in the pursuit of justice.

STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Student Advisory Council is a structured program that fosters meaningful dialogue among high school students on legal matters and contemporary issues, while strengthening oral advocacy skills in a supportive environment. Designed to prepare participants to engage thoughtfully with complex topics, the program offers an enriching platform for discussion and growth.

In 2025, the Council averaged 23 regular participants, providing a consistent forum for student voices and perspectives on justice and civic engagement.



Legal Explorers participated in an emotional intelligence workshop.



The Student Advisory Council held a meeting in October 2025.

SATURDAY NIGHT LIGHTS (SNL)

The Saturday Night Lights (SNL) Program, delivered in partnership with the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and the New York Police Department (NYPD), provides recreational programming for young people on Saturday evenings. With a focus on youth development and violence prevention, the program offers a safe environment where participants engage in athletics and constructive activities between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. Staff actively engage with preteens and teenagers, fostering stronger relationships among youth, law enforcement, and the broader community. As of 2025, there were 28 Saturday Night Lights (SNL) sites operating across the borough, offering consistent access to safe and enriching opportunities for young people.



DA Katz spoke with summer high school interns and emphasized that a young person's first encounter with their District Attorney or any member of the office should take place in a positive environment.

QDA SUMMER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The QDA Summer Leadership Program is a comprehensive six-week paid internship designed to provide Queens youth with an in-depth understanding of the diverse roles and responsibilities within law enforcement, while exploring career prospects and developing practical skills. In the summer of 2025, participants engaged in meaningful conversations with a wide range of law enforcement professionals, gaining valuable insights into career pathways and public service.

As part of the program, participants took part in a community service initiative aimed at addressing food insecurity. In partnership with the Evangel Christian Center in Long Island City, they volunteered at the food pantry, assisting with organizing, cleaning, and distributing goods to individuals and families in need. Participants also attended the annual NYPD employment fair at the Police Academy, contributed to the beautification of the Astoria housing development area, and welcomed presenters from the NYPD, OCME, FBI, and other agencies.

The 2025 internship cohort included 28 participants, each of whom gained professional exposure, civic awareness, and practical experience through this multifaceted program.

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SYEP)

In the summer of 2025, the office hosted SYEP participants. This six-week program, funded by the Department of Youth and Community Development, gives young people between the ages of 16 to 24 the opportunity to enhance their office skills while gaining exposure to the criminal justice system. These participants learned office etiquette and research and interpersonal skills, improving their marketability to secure jobs for the future.



As part of Hope and Leadership initiatives, the office partnered with the NYPD to facilitate a training on Emotional Intelligence and Positive Police Interaction. The presentation received positive feedback from both students and faculty, promoting a more profound understanding of community safety and collaboration.



Students in the QDA Leadership Summer Program helped with food distribution to combat food deserts in Long Island City and assisted the Astoria Houses Youth Enrichment Services with neighborhood improvement projects, including painting, weeding and planting.

SECTION IV: FAIR AND JUST PROCESS

HOPE AND LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The Hope and Leadership Academy provides topic-based instruction for middle and high school students, supported by organizations including the Queens District Attorney's Office, the NYPD Options program, and other law enforcement agencies. The program equips young people with effective strategies for making positive choices while providing career-based exposure.

Guest presenters draw on their professional expertise to mentor and advise students in areas such as conflict resolution, social responsibility, respect for others, and pathways to a positive future. Instruction is delivered through courtroom visits and classroom presentations, offering students practical insights into the justice system and civic responsibility.

The curriculum addresses a wide range of critical issues, including cyberbullying, internet safety, hate crimes, fentanyl poisoning and overdose awareness, gang violence prevention, and human trafficking.

In the 2025 academic year, the Hope and Leadership Academy successfully organized and delivered approximately 156 presentations across Queens County, reaching more than 10,000 young adults.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

In 2024, District Attorney Katz announced \$2.75 million in funding for 34 community-based organizations as part of the second phase of her office's Community Youth Development and Crime Prevention Project (CYDCPP), which will run from 2024 to 2026. This investment is intended to strengthen youth learning programs with the overarching goal of enhancing personal skills and professional development.

The CYDCPP initiative is designed to foster positive relationships between communities and law enforcement, reduce youth crime, build self-confidence among young people, increase exposure to positive adult role models, and improve academic performance and school attendance. The new phase of the program includes 21 organizations that were previously funded in 2021, along with 13 new partners, expanding its reach and impact across Queens communities.

To date, the CYDCPP fund has continued to enrich programs and provide county youth with a wide range of opportunities. These include SAT preparation, architectural design, critical thinking and youth advocacy spaces, financial literacy and business planning workshops, STEM education, mental health and family counseling, as well as initiatives addressing food insecurity through food pantries and combating truancy. Through this grant, county youth are able to access the comprehensive wraparound services they need to succeed academically, personally, and professionally.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS & POLICY

District Attorney Katz has served the public for more than 30 years in many capacities. As the top law enforcement official in Queens County, DA Katz is keenly aware of the importance of maintaining relationships and building trust with other elected officials and outside agencies at all levels of government.

The Intergovernmental Affairs & Policy department (IGA&P) was created to coordinate and strengthen the office's relationships with outside agencies and elected officials on a variety of criminal justice related issues. IGA&P monitors and tracks legislation on city and state levels and assists with bill drafting to find legislative solutions to better protect and serve the community. IGA&P also works to improve operational functions and assists with the implementation of new initiatives and protocols. They identify and promote the District Attorney's legislative priorities and conduct research on a variety of policy and legislative issues.

PROFESSIONALS OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

DA Katz strongly believes in the importance of **community engagement and empowerment**. This has led QDA Assistant District Attorneys and support staff to present at hundreds of public events throughout the borough of Queens. The staff meets the public where they are, to offer their expertise and vast knowledge to the communities they serve. The following events capture just a snapshot of the many community presentations delivered by QDA staff.



ADA Timothy McGrath of the Felony Conferencing Bureau and ADA Katira Campos of Felony Trial Bureau I and coordinators from the QDA's Community Response Team took part in QDA's Mobile Office at the East Elmhurst branch of the Queens Public Library.



At Bay Terrace Garden Jewish Center, Elder Fraud Coordinator Daren Wilkes delivered a presentation on fraud and how to prevent becoming a victim.



ADA Rosemary Chao, Bureau Chief in Felony Trial Bureau I, spoke to students at Long Island City High School about the dangers of fentanyl.



ADA Carolyn Fitzgerald, Supervisor in the Elder Fraud Unit, at the Elmhurst Older Adult Center talked to community members about identity theft and other scams and how to avoid being victimized.



Housing and Worker Protection Bureau Chief ADA Bill Jorgenson spoke at the Utopia Estates Civic Association on deed fraud.



Members of the Domestic Violence Bureau attended QDA's Domestic Violence Awareness Month Empowerment lunch at the Greater Allen A.M.E. Cathedral of New York. EADA Joyce Smith and Bureau Chief ADA Mary Kate Quinn delivered remarks at the event.

MELINDA KATZ

Cryptocurrency
Silent Epidemic
2025

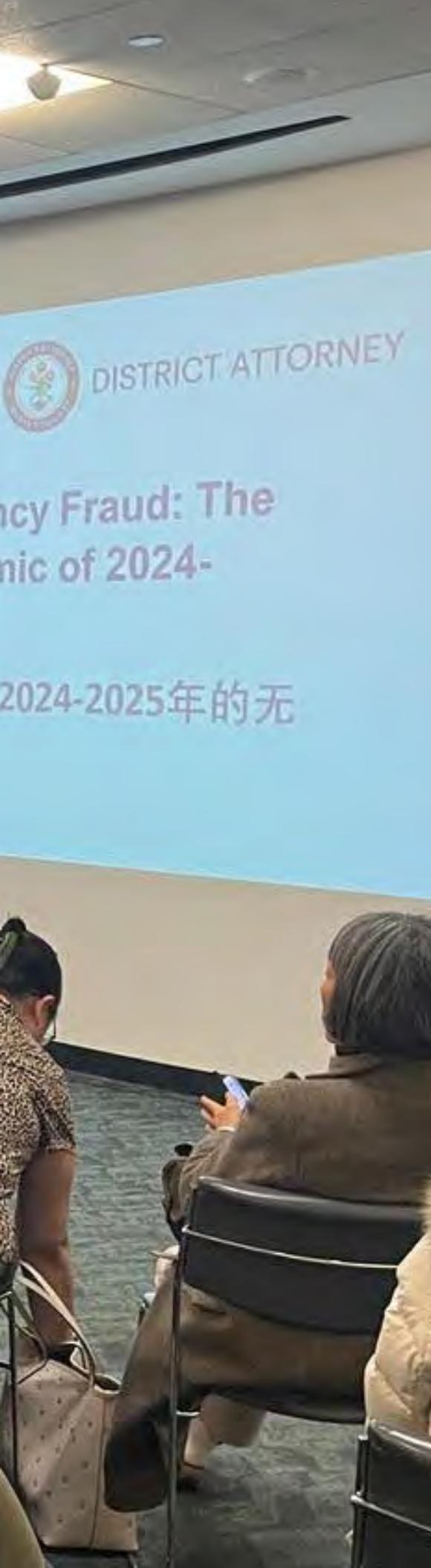
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SECTION V

POLICY INTO PRACTICE

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SECTION V: POLICY INTO PRACTICE

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



JENNIFER NAIBURG

CHIEF ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Chief Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Naiburg has been a prosecutor for over 30 years. Prior to DA Katz's administration, Ms. Naiburg served the office in many capacities: as an accomplished trial lawyer, instructor, manager and innovator. Since DA Katz took office in January of 2020, Ms. Naiburg has worked tirelessly to fulfill the District Attorney's mission of Brave Justice – keeping the communities of Queens safe while helping to implement fairness and equity within the criminal justice system. In addition to her leadership of DA Katz's executive team, Ms. Naiburg serves as an adjunct professor at Cardozo Law School after having taught at Fordham Law School for the preceding 10 years.



WENDY ERDLY

CHIEF OF STAFF/ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Erdly was appointed Chief of Staff to the Queens District Attorney's Office in April 2023. She is an attorney and public administration executive with more than a decade of public service experience. Since joining the Queens District Attorney's Office, Ms. Erdly has worked to enhance the technological and data capacity of the office and to support the growth and development of the non-legal professional staff.

EXECUTIVE TEAM AND DIVISIONS

The Queens District Attorney's Office is organized by division with each Executive Assistant District Attorney managing bureaus and units as follows:

JOHN CASTELLANO

COUNSEL TO THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

With more than 40 years of experience in the Queens District Attorney's Office, Mr. Castellano has handled cases at all levels of the state and federal court systems. This includes over 100 cases in the highest court in the State of New York and numerous matters in the Supreme Court of the United States. As counsel, he advises the District Attorney and Assistant District Attorneys throughout the office on legal matters.

VINCENT CARROLL

COUNSEL TO THE CHIEF ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY

In 1976, Mr. Carroll joined the Queens District Attorney's Office and worked in numerous bureaus until 1982, when he became Deputy Chief of the Appellate Division Grievance Committee for the Second and Eleventh Judicial Districts. In 1991, Mr. Carroll returned to the Queens DA's Office and became Counsel to the Chief Assistant in 2002.

APPEALS AND SPECIAL LITIGATION DIVISION

EADA JOHNNETTE TRAILL

APPEALS BUREAU

- FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOIL) AND CIVIL LITIGATION UNIT
- IMMIGRATION UNIT

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS DIVISION

EADA COLLEEN BABB

CIVIC AWARENESS UNIT

- OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UNIT

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT UNIT

CRIMINAL PRACTICE AND POLICY DIVISION

EADA THERESA SHANAHAN

CRIMINAL COURT BUREAU

INTAKE AND ASSESSMENTS BUREAU

REHABILITATION PROGRAMS & RESTORATIVE SERVICES BUREAU

- CRIME VICTIMS ADVOCATE PROGRAM
- DIVERSION AND ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING UNIT

MAJOR CRIMES DIVISION

EADA SHAWN CLARK

CAREER CRIMINAL MAJOR CRIMES BUREAU

FORENSICS

HATE CRIMES BUREAU

HOMICIDE BUREAU

- COLD CASE UNIT
- VEHICULAR HOMICIDE UNIT

INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

CRIME STRATEGIES AND INTELLIGENCE BUREAU

FRAUDS BUREAU

- CRIMES AGAINST REVENUE UNIT
- ELDER FRAUD UNIT

HOUSING AND WORKER PROTECTION BUREAU

- REAL ESTATE THEFT UNIT

HUMAN TRAFFICKING BUREAU

MAJOR ECONOMIC CRIMES BUREAU

- AIRPORT INVESTIGATIONS UNIT
- AUTO CRIME UNIT
- CYBER CRIME UNIT
- MAJOR NARCOTICS UNIT

PUBLIC CORRUPTION BUREAU

VIOLENT CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES BUREAU

SPECIAL PROSECUTIONS DIVISION

EADA JOYCE SMITH

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BUREAU

- ANIMAL CRUELTY PROSECUTIONS UNIT

JUVENILE PROSECUTIONS UNIT

SPECIAL VICTIMS BUREAU

- CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER
- ELDER ABUSE PROJECT SOCIAL WORKERS

SUPREME COURT TRIAL DIVISION

EADA PISHOY YACOUB

DISCOVERY COMPLIANCE UNIT

FELONY CONFERENCING BUREAU

- EXTRADITIONS, RENDITIONS AND PROPERTY RELEASE SERVICES

FELONY TRIAL BUREAUS I, II, III, IV

GRAND JURY BUREAU

LITIGATION TRAINING

SECTION V: POLICY INTO PRACTICE

TRAINING

DA Katz ensures that all Assistant District Attorneys abide by the highest ethical and moral standards assigned to prosecutors. To accomplish this, enhanced training requirements, including tiered career training and the continuing legal education of the professional staff, were implemented early in her tenure.

New prosecutors begin with an intensive, six-week Incoming Orientation Training Program, designed to prepare new hires to succeed. This training includes lectures and interactive sessions on criminal law and procedure, ethics, and basic courtroom skills.

Throughout their careers, prosecutors receive training, including the Felony Assistant and Grand Jury Training Program, and trial advocacy training for both misdemeanor and felony assistants.

Litigation Training also hosts weekly and monthly office-wide Continuing Legal Education lectures on a variety of topics to ensure all QDA Assistants stay up to date on the latest and best practices.



As part of the Incoming Orientation Training Program, new ADAs visited the NYPD's 113th Precinct in Jamaica, which is home to the Queens South Emergency Services Unit.



New Queens prosecutors were sworn in by DA Katz at the start of their six-week training.

QDA EXPERTS LEADING THE NATION

The expertise of our staff is frequently sought on a variety of topics at the local, state, national and international levels. ADAs also teach as adjunct professors at universities and law schools.

In 2025, some of the presentations at which we have participated include:

National Asian Pacific American Bar Association Annual Conference (Denver, CO)

Gender-Based and Racialized Harm Against Women ADA Sung

Rockland County Police & Public Safety Academy (Pomona, NY)

Courtroom Testimony CADA Naiburg

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (Roanoke, VA)

Advanced Ghost Gun Investigations, Prosecutions and Trends. ADA LaCorte

New York Police Department Detective Bureau

Surveillance Video as Evidence ADA Sennett

Women Intended for Excellence, Inc. (Mineola, NY)

Human Trafficking Symposium ADA Melton

The American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors

Confrontation Clause & Smith v. Arizona ADA Valerio

American Academy of Forensic Sciences Annual Conference (Baltimore, MD)

Solving Cold Cases Using Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy ADA Ross

National Cybercrime Conference (Norwood, MA)

Digital Evidence in Cryptocurrency investigations Sgt. DenDekker

New York Statewide Senior Action Council

Elder Fraud and Scam Awareness. ADA Fitzgerald & Coordinator Wilkes

Victim Engagement in Vehicular Crimes (Rochester, NY)

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Approach to Engaging Victims Associate Director Briales

New York Prosecutors Training Institute (Syracuse, NY)

Brady and Giglio in Special Victims Prosecutions ADA Hughes

New York Court System Judicial Institute (Westchester, NY)

Wrongful Convictions and Conviction Integrity Units ADA Benjet

NYC Babies & Toddlers Trauma Investigations Conference (Manhattan, NY)

Appellate Court Scrutiny Counsel Castellano

New York City Interagency Committee on Hate Crimes

Strategies for Hate Crime Responses and Prevention ADA Brovner

SECTION V: POLICY INTO PRACTICE

ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY CLASS OF 2025

District Attorney Katz appointed 51 new Assistant District Attorneys (ADAs) in 2025. Their orientation included a six-week training program, with courtroom observation, interactive workshops, and hands-on practical experience. The new ADAs participated in a ride-along with members of the NYPD and toured the NYPD Laboratory. The NYPD Lab visit included the Controlled Substance Analysis, Firearms Analysis, and Criminalistics sections, which are all vital to the day-to-day work of an Assistant District Attorney. The class members also toured the NYPD's 113th Precinct in Jamaica, which is home to the Queens South Emergency Services Unit.

Additionally, the new prosecutors visited correctional facilities to understand the implications their work has on defendants. They toured the Eric M. Taylor Center and the Rose M. Singer Center on Rikers Island. The new ADAs visited Samaritan Daytop Village, a non-profit organization, to learn more about alternatives to incarceration programs. On their final day of training, the new ADAs visited some of Queens' most significant sites including Long Island City and the Unisphere in Flushing Meadows Corona Park.



The new prosecutors were able to visit Samaritan Daytop Village to learn about alternatives to incarceration.



BRAVE JUSTICE SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The sixth annual Brave Justice Summer Internship Program welcomed 55 law students and 20 college students for a nine-week internship. The interns represented 28 different law schools and 16 colleges. Many of the interns were bilingual, speaking a total of 14 different languages — Arabic, Bengali, Croatian, French, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Spanish, and Urdu.

The internship focused on a variety of topics including legal research and writing, motion and discovery practice, crime scene visits, witness interviews, and court observation. Many had the opportunity to apply their knowledge in court where they appeared alongside ADA supervisors pursuant to the student practice order. The interns participated in educational field trips, including a visit to the New York Police Department's Police Academy. The summer-long practical training culminated in an opportunity to conduct a mock suppression hearing. Afterwards, interns were able to receive feedback from supervisors within the office.



MOCK TRIAL COMPETITION

The 10th Annual Mock Trial Competition included 18 law school teams. New York Supreme and Criminal Court judges from Queens and Brooklyn presided as second-year law students from law schools across the nation participated in the competition. Teams were evaluated by seasoned prosecutors and defense attorneys who gave feedback and scored each round. In the final round, Chicago-Kent College of Law of the Illinois Institute of Technology prevailed over the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University to win the competition.



Chicago-Kent College of Law of the Illinois Institute of Technology took home first place at the 10th Annual Mock Trial Competition.



Participants had the unique opportunity to receive practical experience under conditions closely resembling an actual criminal trial.

SECTION V: POLICY INTO PRACTICE

PROFESSIONALISM RECOGNIZED

Each year, the Queens District Attorney's Office recognizes employees and members of the community who have made a lasting contribution to our borough through their professionalism and hard work.

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE AWARD

Honorees: Somnath Ghimire, President of Girija Prasad Koirala (GPK) Foundation America and The Glow Cultural Center; and Supervising ADA Danielle Fenn and Sergeant Robby Chin of the Queens District Attorney's Office.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH AWARD

Honorees: Shaun D. Francois I, President of DC37; Michelle Dunston, Community Activist; ADA Nicole Reid, Section Chief, Domestic Violence Bureau; and Kechia Kingston, Executive Assistant, Community Partnerships Division.

HISPANIC HERITAGE AWARD

Honorees: ADA Samantha DeLao, Special Victims Bureau; Detective Investigator Freddy Perez; Principal Supreme Court Law Clerk Johanna Carmona, New York State Unified Court System; and Evelia Coyotzi, owner of Evelia's Tamales.

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH AWARD

Honorees: Anna Sokol, Senior Media Specialist at the Queens District Attorney's Office and ADA Talia Vogel, Section Chief, Frauds Bureau.

MEMORIAL DAY AWARD

Honorees: Sergeant Corinne Alpert (United States Navy Medical Corps – Korean War), Specialist Fourth Class Thomas Bullaro (United States Army – Vietnam War), PFC Emery A. Perry (United States Army – Vietnam War), ADA Felicia S. Thomas, Human Trafficking Bureau (United States Coast Guard – 2001-2016).

RICHARD A. BROWN PROSECUTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

ADA Rachel Stein, Deputy Bureau Chief, Housing and Worker Protection Bureau and Unit Chief, Real Estate Theft Unit.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Honorees: ADA Emma Guggenheimer, Intake Bureau, and ADA Rahul Sukesh, Domestic Violence Bureau.

THOMAS E. DEWEY AWARD

Honoree: ADA Jonathan Selkowe, Deputy Bureau Chief, Homicide Bureau and Unit Chief, Vehicular Homicide Unit.

VETERANS DAY AWARD

Honorees: Sergeant First Class Dominick Pepe (United States Army – Vietnam War Veteran), Sergeant Major Jackie Wilson (United States Army Reserve – Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm Veteran), Commander Michael Arcati (United States Navy – Iraq War Veteran), and Specialist Chris Morales Jr., Queens DA's Office Honoree (United States Army – Operation Iraqi Freedom Veteran).

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

Honorees: Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager at Queens Community Board 2; Liza Marquez, Manager for External & Governmental Relations at Queens College CUNY; Malini Shah, Vice President of the Center for the Women of New York Board of Directors; and ADA Pamela Byer, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief of Legal Hiring and Michelle McKinnon, Systems Administrator of the Queens District Attorney's Office.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND HELPLINES**OFFICE CONTACTS****CALL THE QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

General Number	718.286.6000
24 Hour Hotline	718.286.6580
Animal Cruelty Helpline	718.286.6622
Case Information	718.286.6000
Community Partnerships	718.286.6400
Communications	718.286.6315
Consumer Fraud Helpline	718.286.6673
Cyber Crime Unit	718.286.6673
Crime Victims Advocate Program	718.286.6812
Domestic Violence 24/7 Helpline	718.286.4410
Elder Abuse Project Social Worker	718.286.6562
Elder Fraud Helpline	718.286.6578
Gang Violence	718.286.7045
Hate Crimes Helpline	718.286.7010
Housing and Worker Protection Helpline	718.286.6673
Human Trafficking Bureau	718.286.6548
Immigration Helpline	718.286.6690
Intergovernmental Affairs & Policy	718.286.6506

The Queens District Attorney's Office does not report immigration status and we do not tolerate any actions intended to interfere with or retaliate against potential crime witnesses.

EMAIL THE QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

General Information	Info@QueensDA.org
Consumer Fraud	Frauds@QueensDA.org
Conviction Integrity Unit	CIU@QueensDA.org
Crime Victims Advocate Program	CVAP@QueensDA.org
Elder Abuse	ElderAbuse@QueensDA.org
Elder Fraud	ElderFraud@QueensDA.org
Hate Crimes Bureau	HateCrimes@QueensDA.org
Housing and Worker Protection Bureau	HousingWorkerProtection@QueensDA.org
Human Trafficking	HumanTrafficking@QueensDA.org
Office of Immigrant Affairs	OIA@QueensDA.org
Work at the Queens DA's Office	Career@QueensDA.org

Visit our website at www.QueensDA.org

Due to the dynamic nature of the data life cycle (which includes new measures and definitions, data entry, tracking, collection and processing, reporting, and analytics), occasional inconsistencies may arise.

More information about the scope and effectiveness of a few key initiatives is available on our public website at <https://queensda.org>. There, you can find three Data Stories that highlight QDA's efforts to combat crime related to retail theft and guns and how we use proactive community-based programs to invest resources into our community to prevent crime before it even occurs.



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY