



# MELINDA KATZ DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR THE DA'S WEEKLY EBLAST,  
EMAIL REQUESTS TO  
INFO@QUEENS.DA.ORG

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A Message from District Attorney  
**MELINDA KATZ**

## LOCAL COPS, LOCAL CRIMES ACT

I joined Gov. Kathy Hochul, Police Commissioner Jessica S. Tisch and my fellow district attorneys to announce the “Local Cops, Local Crimes Act.”

The governor’s proposed law would strengthen constitutional safeguards and prohibit local law enforcement from being deputized by ICE for federal civil immigration enforcement. Federal agents would also be prohibited from using local detention centers for civil immigration enforcement, mass raids, or the transportation of detainees.

I believe strongly in accountability for criminal conduct. Local law enforcement officers must prioritize upholding local laws while building trust with the communities they serve. That trust is essential to public safety.

We continue to work closely with our federal partners in criminal investigations and in pursuit of defendants accused of breaking New York state laws. At the same time, our local law enforcement partners must remain at the forefront of day-to-day enforcement operations.

The success of our work is contingent upon the trust and engagement of the local community.

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## MAN INDICTED IN ATTEMPTED KNIFE ATTACK ON POLICE OFFICER

The Queens District Attorney’s office secured an indictment charging a 22-year-old Briarwood man with attempted assault and criminal possession of a weapon. The defendant allegedly attempted to attack a police officer while holding a large kitchen knife.

This case is about the intersection of public safety and mental health.

According to the investigation, on January 26 at approximately 10:25 a.m., a 911 call was placed by one of the defendant’s relatives reporting that the young man was throwing glass inside the family home.

When two NYPD officers arrived at the home, they were led inside the residence by a family member. The officers observed the young man in the kitchen where he then allegedly grabbed a large knife and advanced toward them. The police officers retreated and one of them repeatedly directed the defendant to drop the knife.

The young man ignored commands to drop the weapon and pushed through a door which a police officer was using to shield himself. Only then did the police shoot the defendant, striking him four times.

The man was taken to the hospital for treatment and the DA’s office initiated an investigation into the events.

“As prosecutors, we are duty-bound to follow the facts, evidence and circumstances where they lead us, including in cases that have a mental health component,” District Attorney Katz said.

“These decisions, however, must be thoughtful, deliberative and based on the expertise of mental health professionals.”

There is no way to make an immediate determination at a crime scene whether someone is not criminally responsible and that a matter should be handled outside of the criminal justice system, the DA said.

Dispositions can take vastly different forms that include getting defendants help to deal with their mental health needs, should that be warranted, DA Katz said. She said the office will use every resource to address the unique needs in this case while upholding the responsibility of keeping Queens residents safe.



# THE QDA'S ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST



The DA's office welcomed elected officials from across Queens for our annual Legislative Breakfast. The yearly gathering is an opportunity to talk to lawmakers about the office's accomplishments in 2025 and our legislative priorities for 2026.

The DA is adamant that the penalties for those who hurt or kill animals be increased and strongly supports legislation to move the crime of aggravated cruelty to animals from the Agriculture and Markets Law to the Penal Law. This would allow prosecutors to push for more appropriate sentencing and designate predicate status for those convicted. If amended, the crime would become a violent felony offense.

Another concern is the epidemic of vehicular violence that is jeopardizing the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and responsible motorists.

Unlicensed drivers are causing serious physical injuries and sometimes deaths. The DA is advocating for greater penalties for those who drive without a license.

Driving while intoxicated by drugs is just as serious as driving while drunk on alcohol.

That is why the office is urging legislative changes to make it easier to charge and prosecute those who create havoc on the streets of Queens while high on drugs.



## CASES OF INTEREST

A Virginia man was convicted at trial of murder in the second degree in the strangulation death of 15-year-old Nadine Slade in her Far Rockaway home (right) in May 1992. The cold case was revived thanks to new DNA testing, done at the request of the DA's Cold Case Unit and the NYPD Cold Case Squad, that connected defendant **Jerry Lewis** to the unsolved murder.

Lewis, 60, was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison.

In a separate case, a defendant who shoved his 64-year-old mother from a third-story window – after attacking her with her own cane and threatening her with two kitchen knives – was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

**George Tsintzelis**, 37, was convicted at trial of attempted murder in the second degree, assault in the first and second degrees, aggravated



criminal contempt and other crimes. The victim sustained several broken bones, lacerations and internal bleeding. She is still receiving treatment for her injuries.

## GUN BUYBACK EVENT

The DA's office hosted its 12th gun buyback event last month, which resulted in a record 124 firearms – including 10 automatic weapons – turned over to law enforcement. These events give anyone in possession of a firearm the opportunity to turn it in to police with no questions asked.

Participants who surrendered a working gun were awarded with a bank card pre-loaded with cash.

The event was co-hosted by the NYPD and the office of Attorney General Letitia James. The gun buyback was held at the Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Jamaica with the help of the church's pastor, the Rev. Dr. Frankco J. Harris.

Since 2020, a total of 741 firearms have been

removed from the streets through the DA's gun buyback events. Every gun collected is a potential life saved.



## CELEBRATING THE LUNAR NEW YEAR

DA Katz was joined by members of the Queens DA's office at the annual Lunar New Year Parade in Flushing, hosted by the Flushing

Chinese Business Community. It was a beautiful day for a festive gathering to observe the Year of the Fire Horse.

