

**NYC Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor  
Improving Workforce Retention in the Civil Service Testimony  
January 27, 2025**

**INTRODUCTION**

Good afternoon. My name is Katrina Porter, and I am the Chief Human Capital Officer for the City of New York and Deputy Commissioner of Human Capital at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, also known as DCAS.

I am joined here today by my colleagues, DCAS Assistant Commissioner for Workforce Operations, Kadian Outar; DCAS Assistant Commissioner for Examinations, Robert Alexander; and Daniel Pollak, First Deputy Commissioner with the Office of Labor Relations.

**RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OVERVIEW**

To begin, I would like to give a brief overview of DCAS' recruitment and retention efforts on behalf of the City of New York. Recruitment and retention are essential to ensuring the City has the workforce necessary to meet its mission. These efforts are reflective of this administration's commitment to deliver vital city services for New Yorkers every day.

**RECRUITMENT**

Among the most important tools in the DCAS toolkit is the administration of civil service exams. These exams provide an even playing field to attaining a career within New York City government and an eligible pool of candidates for agencies to draw from when job openings become available. Over 80 percent of city government positions require candidates to take and pass a civil service exam.

We employ a multifaceted approach to outreach, engaging community-based organizations, leveraging social media, conducting targeted press campaigns, and utilizing advertising to inform New Yorkers about career opportunities in municipal government. As of today, we're proud to share that our DCAS-initiated jobs newsletter has grown tremendously. To date, over 200,000 job-seeking subscribers receive the newsletter monthly.

As part of the technological enhancements made to the revamped NYC Careers online portal – which connects prospective candidates to all open City jobs – we have seen the number of employment applications hit new highs. The number of applications received via this more user-friendly Jobs NYC website increased by 87 percent in fiscal year 2024, compared with fiscal year 2023, to a record 1,373,696 applications. This reflects the success of our efforts to make city jobs more accessible and appealing to New Yorkers.

All these efforts supplement our more traditional outreach and collaboration, both internally and externally. The City, along with DCAS and other agencies, engages in intra-agency and external partnerships with institutions like the City University of New York, NYC Public Schools, and nonprofit and community-based organizations, including those that serve justice-involved individuals, to market and promote city career opportunities.

Further bolstering our recruitment efforts, DCAS operates several pathway programs including fellowships, internships, and apprenticeships which help recruit the next generation of talent directly into the municipal workforce.

All told, our recruitment efforts are showing meaningful signs of progress in attracting job seekers to city work.

## **RETENTION**

While recruiting top talent to municipal government service is vital to the City's success, we also know that retaining those same talented New Yorkers is just as important. We want people to not only thrive in their city careers, but also grow professionally so they can make a bigger, positive impact on their fellow New Yorkers.

To foster growth and long-term commitment, we offer robust professional development and promotional opportunities tailored to employees' career aspirations.

As entry-level civil service exams provide a gateway to solid, middle-class jobs with good benefits, promotional exams provide important pathways for upward mobility. To afford employees the tools and resources they need to grow, DCAS and the City offer professional development training, including through the NYC Management Academy, Leadership Institute, training expos, the DCAS Course Catalog, and access to our new, comprehensive e-learning platform, NYCityLearn. Also, we will soon be rolling out career counseling as a service to city employees, in accordance with Local Law 75 of 2024. We look forward to seeing all these efforts continue to bear fruit in the coming months.

When looking at the data, we see that the City of New York is competitive with the private sector when it comes to filling vacancies with talented New Yorkers. And our retention rate of 90 percent is similar to other large public sector employers like New York State, which is also at 90 percent, and the federal government, at 94 percent.

Data indicates that citywide agency vacancies are low overall, at approximately 5.7 percent, which is down from a high of 8.4 percent in November 2021. We continue to see very high rates for both retention and tenure. Compared to the three-year average time that an employee stays in a private sector position, DCAS' data shows that a city employee serves more than three times as long, or about 10 years. In fact, three-quarters of the municipal workforce has served for five years or more. Thanks to the myriad programs and policies in place to support City employees, the City of New York is one of the top employers of choice for New Yorkers.

## **DATA SUMMATION**

While the data demonstrates progress towards recruitment and retention, we know that there is always more work to do, and DCAS both appreciates and shares the Council's interest in further improving efforts at retention.

We are always thinking about retention and how to ensure that employees remain in their jobs. DCAS' data analysis reflects that we maintain over 90 percent employee retention. While slightly higher before the pandemic, the retention rate has remained relatively stable since then. That said, compared to the private sector, our data shows that the City is more than competitive, with three times the private sector's retention rate.

We are also seeing great progress in addressing employee attrition. For the first time since the pre-Covid era, the City was able to offset separations with hires in fiscal year 2024. For context, at its worst, in fiscal year 2022, separations outpaced hires during the middle of the pandemic at a rate of 65 employees hired for each 100 employees who separated. As with rest of the nation, post-pandemic, the City pivoted from in-person work to a hybrid workplace to meet the demands of the labor market.

Continuous improvement is a cornerstone of our current and long-term strategic planning as a service-provider to our partner City agencies.

## **INTRODUCTION 671**

Before concluding, I would like to speak to Intro 671. DCAS supports the spirit of this legislation. However, I should note that – through our work – we have found eliminating civil service exam fees does not increase the number of exam takers or passing candidates.

Despite introducing several avenues for applicants to have exam fees waived over the years, many of which remain in place, we have found that while more people may apply to take tests, the number of test takers that show up for an exam does not increase.

We believe that this bill aligns with the State's new law that expands opportunities for high school seniors to take civil service exams by empowering candidates who are within 12 months of meeting diploma and age requirements to take those exams, which has already been operationalized by DCAS.

## **CONCLUSION**

I hope we have made it clear that the City and DCAS are constantly working to ensure agencies have access to the tools necessary to recruit and retain the staff they need to deliver on their individual missions and provide vital city services to the people of New York.

We always recognize that there is more work to be done and challenges to be overcome. Through creative partnerships across government, including with public safety and human services agencies, we're working to tackle recruitment challenges to ensure that our city continues to be an employer of choice for New Yorkers.

Thank you for this opportunity. I would now be happy to address any questions the committee may have.

**New York City Council  
Committee on Civil Service and Labor**

**Testimony By:  
Daniel Pollak, First Deputy Commissioner,  
Mayor's Office of Labor Relations (OLR)**

**January 27, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair De La Rosa and members of the Civil Service and Labor committee. My name is Daniel Pollak, and I am the First Deputy Commissioner of the Office of Labor Relations. Today, I will briefly outline our efforts through collective bargaining to improve recruitment and retention within the City workforce.

Coming out of the COVID pandemic and the nationwide recruitment and retention challenges commonly called the "great resignation," recruitment and retention was a focus for us in the current round of bargaining. First and foremost, the 5-year pattern in this round included the most significant wage increases in more than a decade, totaling 16.21% over the five-year term. Since our first agreement with DC 37 in February 2023, we have settled contracts with 138 bargaining units, covering over 98% of unionized City employees. Negotiations with the remaining unions are ongoing.

We introduced a new initiative this round to tackle areas with significant recruitment and retention challenges. For eligible units with demonstrable recruitment and retention issues, the union could allocate up to 0.50% of funding through a contract extension or similar means, with the City matching this funding by an additional 0.50%. This feature recognizes that recruitment and retention issues are a joint problem for management and labor, and that we can work together to address those issues through collaboration and negotiation. Equity funding has facilitated permanent lifeguard salary increases, a retention bonus program for 911 operators, accelerated top-pay schedules for Special Officers and School Safety Agents, and a new salary structure for Probation Officers. These are just some of the provisions we have reached agreement on in this round to enhance recruitment and retention.

Our agreement with DC 37, as well as numerous other unions, also included a flexible work pilot. Through that pilot and the ongoing work of a labor-management committee established by the DC 37 agreement, we created a remote work pilot and have rolled out remote

work at every City agency. We have also established a compressed workweek pilot, which is being implemented at many agencies. The flexible work pilot runs through May 30, 2025. As the deadline approaches, we will continue our ongoing discussions with DC 37 to evaluate and plan next steps.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to take any questions.



## UNITED PROBATION OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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### **Testimony of Dalvanie K. Powell, President, United Probation Officers Association**

Before the NYC Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor  
Hearing on *"Improving Workforce Retention in the Civil Service"*  
January 27, 2025

Good afternoon, Chair De La Rosa and esteemed members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the critical issue of workforce retention at the NYC Department of Probation (DOP). My name is Dalvanie K. Powell, and I serve as President of the United Probation Officers Association (UPOA), representing nearly 700 Supervising Probation Officers, Probation Officers, Probation Officer Trainees, and Probation Assistants. Our members, predominantly women and people of color, work tirelessly to uphold public safety while helping individuals rebuild their lives.

Becoming a Probation Officer requires a bachelor's degree and two years of experience or a master's degree. We are peace officers, trained alongside police and corrections officers, authorized to carry firearms, make arrests, and perform essential public safety duties. Yet, despite our critical role in providing an alternative to incarceration—saving the City and State millions of dollars—our compensation lags significantly behind that of the NYPD, Corrections, and even probation officers in surrounding counties like Suffolk, Nassau, and Westchester.

Over the past six years, staffing levels at DOP have dropped precipitously. In 2018, the Department's headcount was 832; today, that number has plummeted to 645. This decline has been driven by an alarming rate of attrition. In 2023 alone, 103 staff members resigned, 32 retired, and 28 were terminated. In 2024, these numbers included 78 resignations and 25 retirements. With fewer officers on the job, caseloads have soared, pushing the remaining workforce to the brink.

Retention challenges extend beyond low wages. The current DOP administration has implemented policies and practices that have exacerbated the crisis. The removal of caseloads from Probation Officer Trainees, despite a severe staffing shortage, is one such misstep. Additionally, the Department is planning to disband Court Liaison Officer units and replace them with higher-paid attorneys, disregarding UPOA's warnings about the violation of bargaining rights. Family court staffing has been cut by 40% at a time when juvenile cases have risen under the Raise the Age initiative, further straining resources.

Meanwhile, hiring efforts have stalled, with three academy classes and crucial exams canceled, resulting in only 57 new hires during a time of critical need. Unrealistic demands on staff have also intensified, including excessive documentation and time tracking requirements, coupled with discouragement of necessary adjournments despite overwhelming caseloads. These policies not only hinder productivity but also contribute to low morale.

Furthermore, punitive disciplinary measures have replaced progressive discipline, creating an environment of fear and intimidation. Direct interference with UPOA members by management, following the union's raised concerns, has further eroded trust between staff and leadership.

We strongly support Int. 671, which would waive the civil service exam fee for first-time applicants and high school students. Removing financial barriers to entry is a positive step toward addressing recruitment challenges across civil service agencies, including the DOP. However, this is just one piece of the puzzle. Retention requires a work environment founded on respect, dignity, and professionalism.

To stabilize the DOP, leadership must collaborate with unions to address staffing and workload issues, develop realistic plans for hiring and training, and create pathways for career growth while prioritizing institutional knowledge. Policies that support, rather than undermine, the workforce are essential for building a sustainable agency.

The DOP is at a breaking point, and immediate action is necessary to prevent further deterioration and to ensure the Department can continue its critical mission.

Thank you for your attention. I am happy to answer any questions.





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## **Testimony in Support of Int 0671-2024, Res 0333-2024, and Improving Workforce Retention in the Civil Service**

January 29, 2025

To the Committee on Civil Service and Labor:

My name is Molly Senack, and I am submitting testimony today on behalf of the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY) as their Education and Employment Community Organizer. This testimony is supported by Sharon McLennon Wier, Ph.D., MEd., CRC, LMHC, Executive Director of CIDNY.

In 2022, only 34.8% of disabled people between the ages of 16-64 were employed in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, people with disabilities are less likely to work in traditionally higher paid managerial or professional positions than people without disabilities- 37.4% compared to 43.9% respectively. Employees with a disability are almost twice as likely to only work part-time as people without a disability (30% vs 16%), and according to the American Community Survey, people with disabilities in NYS are also almost twice as likely as people without disabilities to live below the poverty line (30% vs 17%).

The likelihood of people with disabilities experiencing poverty or underemployment is not due to a lack of desire to work, but rather to the systemic occupational segregation and pay disparity in many sectors of the workforce. People with disabilities can experience disproportionate difficulty obtaining and retaining well-paying jobs, in part because many of the practices involved in applying, hiring, and training for jobs and subsequent promotions are implicitly discriminatory. Employees who request accommodations that they are legally entitled to can be met with discouragement and even hostility in the workplace, often leaving those employees with a difficult decision: either struggle to work without necessary resources and supports or endure further marginalization by soliciting them. Both choices can lead to the employee being overlooked for promotions, or even to them leaving their job entirely.

As the NYC Council considers ways to improve workforce retention in the civil service sector, acknowledging the relationship between systemic accessibility and workforce retention is critical. We encourage the Council to include improvements to accessibility in the civil service sector as a cornerstone of their plan to improve civil service workforce retention, and additionally, to pass **Int 0671-2024**. This bill would waive the civil service examination fee for first time applicants and for high school students, thereby making it easier for people with disabilities to obtain civil service positions regardless of whether they decide to participate in the 55-a program.

CIDNY also asks the Council to pass **Res 0333-2024**. This will address another significant factor in the likelihood of people with disabilities living below the poverty line by asking the NYS Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, a bill that would eliminate the subminimum wage for employees based on their disability or age.

Despite the assertion that 14(c) programs, which allow a subminimum wage to be paid, provide people with certain disabilities access to initial employment and then opportunities for advancement to competitive integrated employment (CIE), studies have consistently found the opposite to be true. A series of articles by *The Washington Post* in 2024 amplified the same findings as the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the National Council on Disability (NCD): very few disabled employees working under 14(c) ever make the transition to CIE (in 2022, just 0.5 percent of 14(c) workers were referred by their employers to vocational rehabilitation service), and in states where 14(c) programs were eliminated, overall employment of adults with cognitive disabilities (who make up about 91% of the people with disabilities earning a subminimum wage) actually increased.

These studies make it clear that 14(c) programs not only contribute directly to the increased likelihood of people with disabilities living below the poverty line by paying often only pennies on the dollar for labor, but also indirectly, by restricting the ability of the workers employed under them to explore other options.

We thank the Council for their time and effort, and support the passage of these pieces of legislation, as well as their commitment to improving the civil service sector for all New Yorkers, especially those with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Molly Senack (She/Her)  
Education and Employment Community Organizer  
Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York  
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**"Oversight - Improving Workforce Retention in the Civil Service."**

New York City Council  
Civil Service and Labor Committee Hearing

Monday, January 27, 2025

1:00 pm

Committee Room  
250 Broadway New York, NY

Good afternoon, Madame Chair Carmen De La Rosa, Committee Members and all attendees. I am Darrell L. Sims, President of the New York City Managerial Employees Association (MEA) and Alice Wong, the Executive Director of the MEA. We would like to thank the Committee for providing us with the opportunity to testify on behalf of the over 15,600 New York City managerial and original jurisdiction municipal employees (managers), and MEA members.

After a 39-year career working at HPD, I retired on January 1, 2020. Elected as MEA President, I commenced my second three-year term on January 1, 2025. Based on my experience and from information expressed to me by the MEA Executive Board and our members, there are various reasons as to why it has become difficult and challenging to maintain the municipal workforce especially during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic. At the top of the list were pay raises and hybrid work options. The Administration approved pay raises in February of 2024 and a two-year hybrid work pilot for managers in October of 2023. Notwithstanding these proactive initiatives to address employee morale, retention and recruitment by the Administration, there remains a need for more incentives to retain the existing workforce and to attract applicants to public service employment.

In recognition of dedicated civil service and as an incentive for career managers to remain in public service, MEA strongly advocates for longevity pay compensation to be added to the base salaries of qualified managers. A longevity pay plan for managers would provide parity in compensation with non-managerial civil service employees. District Council 37 in conjunction with the Administration enacted longevity pay compensation for its members in the 1986 Collective Bargaining Agreement. We strongly support parity in the structure of employee longevity pay compensation for managers. The longevity pay should not be based on specific managerial civil service titles or managerial levels. It is proposed that longevity compensation be awarded to managers who have maintained at least a satisfactory rating on their performance evaluations and that these pay increases be made at specific milestones of their civil service careers.

Developing and implementing a longevity pay plan can assist the Administration in maintaining a skilled, knowledgeable, experienced, and committed managerial workforce. Longevity compensation can be a method to encourage continued employment, reduce hiring and training costs, promote career growth, and assist in maintaining favorable reputations for agencies by assuring consistency and stability in program operations and procedures. Additionally, the recognition of employee tenure through financial incentives can positively impact morale and job satisfaction.

Longevity pay is structured as a step increase in the salary scale that is added to the base pay upon reaching specific five-year intervals of service. The following is a conceptual synopsis of how eligible New York City managers would receive longevity pay compensation relative to the amount of time spent in a managerial title or titles:

- At the end of **five years of service** in a civil service managerial title(s), each manager, shall receive fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500), based on three hundred dollars (\$300) per year of service - added to the base salary.
- At the end of **ten years of service** in a civil service managerial title(s), each manager, shall receive an additional fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500) longevity pay compensation - added to the base salary.
- At the end of **fifteen years of service** in a civil service managerial title(s), each manager, shall receive an additional fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500) longevity pay compensation - added to the base salary.

Longevity pay compensation will continue to be received when additional milestones are met. It is recommended that longevity pay compensation become pensionable after it is earned for twelve months. For example, at the end of fifteen years of managerial service forty-five hundred dollars (\$4,500) shall be added to a manager's base salary and included in the calculation of pension benefits.

To assist in addressing the high number of job vacancies among municipal agencies will require both expeditious and effective recruitment as well as meaningful efforts to retain the existing municipal workforce. Recruitment and retention must be addressed simultaneously to prevent a counterproductive cyclic trend of hirings and resignations.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important matter.

Very truly yours,



Darrell L. Sims  
President



Alice Wong  
Executive Director



**Testimony of Megan Chambers, Co-Manager of the  
Laundry, Distribution and Food Service Joint Board, Workers United, SEIU  
Before the New York City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor**

**Hearing on Res. 0598-2024  
January 27, 2025**

Good afternoon. My name is Megan Chambers. I am Co-Manager of the labor union Laundry, Distribution and Food Service Joint Board, affiliated with Workers United, SEIU. Our union represents 7,500 front-line service workers in and around New York City, including more than 3,000 workers at industrial laundries. On behalf of our union, I am speaking to express our strong support for Resolution Number 598. Thank you to Chair De La Rosa for introducing this Resolution and for the opportunity to speak today; and thank you to all members of the Committee for your consideration of this urgent and important Resolution.

This resolution supports fair work standards and seeks to curb illegal workplace abuses and exploitation of workers employed by certain contractors that provide service to New York City healthcare institutions, such as hospitals and nursing homes.

Industrial laundry companies use factory-type equipment to launder thousands of pounds per hour of sheets, towels, tablecloths and other washables for use by NYC businesses and institutions. Our union and its members who work in industrial laundries have fought hard for decades to establish fair standards for workers in this sector, embodied in union contracts that include quality union health insurance, employer-paid retirement benefits, extensive health and safety protocols, and important protections for workers' rights. We are proud to report that most industrial laundry companies providing service to New York City hospitals and nursing homes abide by union contracts that embody those standards.

However, FDR Services Corp is a rare and shocking exception. FDR Service Corp is a serial-law-breaking industrial laundry company that, over the past seven-plus years, has flagrantly violated area standards and workers' rights. This Resolution supports the effort to put an end to abuses by FDR Services and calls on New York City hospitals and nursing homes to contract with responsible laundry contractors who respect area standards and workers' rights.

FDR Services employs approximately 175 workers, mostly immigrants and women. Workers at FDR Services Corp's processing plant in Hempstead process thousands of pieces of laundry daily from hospitals and nursing homes in New York City and its suburbs. These are essential workers who ensure that hospital and nursing home staff, nurses, and doctors can safely care for critically

ill patients. It is their job to wash soiled healthcare linens, which contain hazardous waste and contaminants such as used hypodermic needles and bodily fluids.

Workers at FDR Services are members of our union, but they do not enjoy the protections and benefits that the rest of our members in this industry enjoy. For more than seven years, FDR Services has refused to sign a renewal labor contract for these workers, leaving workers to do their dangerous jobs without a union contract and without their quality union health insurance, even during the worst of the COVID pandemic. These workers have also suffered from repeated violations of their legal rights and vile working conditions that have included working through extreme heat, harsh chemicals, dangerous machines, rats, roaches, and lack of hot water for necessary handwashing while working.

**Legal Violations at FDR Services Corp. Violations over those years include:**

- The federal government's National Labor Relations Board issued complaints against FDR Services Corp for alleged labor law violations in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2022.
- During the height of the COVID pandemic, FDR failed to invest consistently in social distancing, proper protective equipment, and other sanitizing and cleanliness measures.
- Even before the pandemic, the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) investigated FDR services after workers complained that the company failed to provide workers who handle soiled hospital linens with Hepatitis B vaccinations.
- Illegal employee firings and NY State Human Right Law violations during the Covid 19 pandemic resulted in FDR being forced to offer reinstatement and pay \$400,000 to a group of terminated employees under a 2021 settlement with the NY State Attorney General.

Workers at FDR have called on the owners of FDR Services to provide them with the same standards which our union has established in contracts for laundry workers across the New York City metropolitan area. FDR Services has refused.

FDR Services' workers deserve better. And so do the patients, staff, and visitors at hospitals and nursing homes who rely on the services provided by the laundry workers at FDR Services Corp.

This Resolution calls on New York City healthcare institutions to contract for laundry service with responsible companies that respect workers' rights, area standards and the law. Valuable health care dollars should not be handed to an abusive employer that is a serial lawbreaker.

We hope this urgently needed resolution will garner this committee's full support.

Thank you.

**For More Information on Legal Violations by FDR Services Corp:**

U.S. National Labor Relations Board:

- CPT.29-CA-214454 (Complaint and Notice of Hearing August 2018)
- CPT.29-CA-235879 (Complaint and Notice of Hearing June 2019)
- CPT.29-CA-257646 (Complaint and Notice of Hearing June 2020)
- CPT.29-CA-294121 (Complaint and Notice of Hearing August 2022)

U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA):

- Inspection Number 1662951 (Citation and Notice of Penalty October 2023)
- Inspection Number 1392312.015 (Citation and Notice of Penalty August 2019)

NY State Attorney General website:

- [Attorney General James Protects Long Island Workers Unlawfully Fired During COVID-19 Pandemic: AG James Recovers \\$400,000 for Laundry Workers Unlawfully Fired by FDR Services, Reinstates Those Employees to the Company \(September 22, 2021\)](#)



## **Testimony of the Family Homelessness Coalition**

### **The New York City Council Committee on General Welfare Oversight – Administration of CityFHEPS**

**January 27, 2025**

The Family Homelessness Coalition (FHC) is made up of more than 20 organizations representing service and housing providers, children’s advocacy organizations and people with lived experience with family homelessness. We are united by the goal of preventing family homelessness, improving the well-being of children and families in shelter, and supporting the long-term stability of families with children who leave shelter.

We would like to thank Chair Ayala and members of the committee for the opportunity to submit testimony on the vital resource of CityFHEPS.

#### **Introduction**

2024 was a record year for homelessness in New York. The state overall experienced a 53% increase in homelessness last year, the highest per capita rate in the nation, according to data from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Meanwhile, a recent report from the State Comptroller’s office shows that the city’s homelessness population has more than doubled since 2022. Furthermore, New York experienced a 71% increase in unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness from last year.

Particularly with uncertainty at the federal level, it is imperative to invest in resources like CityFHEPS which are critical to housing stability and reducing homelessness. We must also collectively work to reduce administrative barriers to these resources working effectively.

FHC strongly urges the full implementation of the CityFHEPS expansion that was passed into law in 2023. The series of changes have since been held up in legal processes, but New Yorkers and their families cannot wait any longer for the critical support that these vouchers provide.

In addition to these reforms, and robust and consistent funding of the program, FHC urges the following administrative changes to better operationalize CityFHEPS. These recommendations are based on the experience of service providers, shelter operators, and people with lived experience.

#### **Reduce Barriers in CityFHEPS Administration**



- **On Inspections:**
  - Do Not Allow Minor Issues to Hold Up Move-In: Apartment inspection processes should be standardized and include a hierarchy of issues, such that minor issues will not result in an inspection failure. Currently, minor issues, which can be immediately rectified, such as a missing light switch cover, may result in an inspection failure and a severe delay to the client's move-in date. This is modeled after NYCHA's approach to inspections.
  - Reform Double Inspection Rule: For units which require a DHS inspection (cellars and ground floor units), DSS requires both a DHS and a separate HRA inspection. We call for the secondary inspection to be limited to a fraction of the units as a secondary review/audit procedure but not policy for every unit.
- **On Income Verification:**
  - The \$100 Rule: The incomes presented in a voucher package must be within \$100 of the original shopping letter amount. With low-income tenant incomes often varying greatly week by week, this discrepancy often triggers a rebudgeting letter, which is a source of delay. DHS/HRA staff who are reviewing this should be allowed to reissue the tenant share with the new income numbers, and not require a separate rebudgeting process.
- **On Public Assistance Single Issuance:**
  - Time Frame: The current time frame is 30 days, but often the process for applying and getting the voucher is longer and requires the single issuance to be resubmitted. We recommend a 90-day time frame.
  - Add Option for Access HRA: There is currently no process on Access HRA to signify that an application is for single issuance public assistance. This results in many applications being treated as ongoing public assistance. This should be a distinct option on Access HRA to avoid confusion.
- **Process Improvements:**
  - Electronic Paperwork: Application packet forms should be readable/fillable PDF forms that can be signed electronically and emailed back, while still allowing for a paper process.
  - Outreach: If a client's application is missing documents, DSS should not wait to contact that client via mail or phone call. DSS should also reach out to clients via text or email which to have the best chance of successfully connecting with clients. DSS often calls to detail this type of information from an unknown number, so clients may not pick up, and then they miss the opportunity to talk about their application. Then, DSS's next step is to send a letter to the client in the mail. The letter should be clear about what information is needed via the AccessHRA portal. Additionally, if a DSS staff person does call a client for this purpose; they should leave a call back number, along with hours of availability.
  - Family Moves Within Shelter. When families are transferred into new shelter locations, the application process should not begin again. When this has occurred,

it has added significant time delays. Applications should maintain even when families move locations.

We strongly recommend that the City fully implement the CityFHEPS expansion, as well as these administrative processes to reduce barriers in the housing placement process. Thank you for your consideration.

Buenas tardes, Mi nombre es **Gerber Archila**, yo soy miembro de la Union de Workers United, y también trabajo en una lavandería en NY.

Gracias por la oportunidad de participar en esta Vista Publica. Estoy aquí para apoyar a nuestras hermanas y hermanos que trabajan en FDR Services, hablando a favor de esta Resolucion importante .

Es increíble escuchar que esta compañía FDR pueda ser tan irresponsable con sus empleados, y como permitimos que esta compañía siga con estos atropellos.

No solamente es un abuso a los trabajadores, sino una falta de respeto a nuestras comunidades incluyendo a los hospitales y asilos de ancianos que tienen contratos con FDR.

Los trabajadores de FDR trabajan en una lavandería igual que yo. Ellos deben de tener como mínimo los mismos beneficios y el mismo buen seguro medico que tenemos nosotros, los miles de trabajadores de lavanderías en nuestra Union en este area.

Es hora de demostrarle a FDR que este tipo de conducta es inaceptable en la ciudad de Nueva York.

Gracias a la Concejala Carmen de la Rosa por su apoyo y gracias a todos los miembros de este Comite.

Muchas gracias por esta oportunidad y por toda su ayuda!!!

**Testimony in Support of Bonus Pay for Bilingual Civil Service Employees to Improve Workforce Retention in New York City**

Honorable Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on the critical issue of workforce retention in New York City's civil service sector. As a staunch advocate for equitable compensation practices and efficient public service delivery, I am writing to highlight the importance of providing bonus pay for bilingual employees and the tangible benefits it can bring to our workforce and communities.

New York City is one of the most linguistically diverse cities in the world, with over 200 languages spoken and nearly half of its residents speaking a language other than English at home. This linguistic diversity creates a profound need for bilingual staff in civil service roles to ensure that every resident, regardless of their language proficiency, can access essential public services. Whether, it is providing accurate information during a crisis, helping residents navigate complex systems like housing or healthcare, or ensuring children receive equitable educational opportunities, bilingual employees are essential to bridging these gaps and meeting the needs of our communities.

The demand for bilingual staff is evident in every corner of the city—from schools and hospitals to emergency services and housing departments. Without sufficient bilingual personnel, language barriers can lead to delays, misunderstandings, and inequitable access to vital services, disproportionately affecting immigrants and non-English-speaking populations. The ability to effectively communicate with residents in their preferred language is not merely a convenience; it is a necessity for equitable public service delivery, and it is the law.

Bilingualism is a valuable skill that requires years of learning and practice to perfect. However, in many instances, employees who use their language skills to perform additional duties, such as translating documents or interpreting for non-English-speaking residents, do not receive compensation that reflects the added value they provide. This lack of recognition can lead to feelings of being undervalued, fostering dissatisfaction and, ultimately, higher turnover rates.

By instituting bonus pay for bilingual employees, New York City would send a strong message that it values the unique contributions of these workers, aligning compensation with responsibilities and promoting greater job satisfaction.

Competitive compensation is a key driver of workforce retention. In today's labor market, private sector employers increasingly offer financial incentives for bilingual candidates, recognizing their ability to meet the needs of a diverse clientele. Without similar incentives, the civil service risks losing talented bilingual individuals to private companies, exacerbating staffing shortages and undermining the City's ability to serve its residents effectively.

Bonus pay for bilingual employees would enhance the City's ability to attract and retain skilled workers. It would position civil service roles as competitive career options for multilingual professionals, ensuring that the City retains a workforce capable of meeting its linguistic and cultural needs.

**Testimony in Support of Bonus Pay for Bilingual Civil Service Employees to Improve Workforce  
Retention in New York City**

Providing bonus pay for bilingual employees is also an issue of equity. Many bilingual workers come from immigrant backgrounds and are often concentrated in roles with limited opportunities for advancement. Recognizing their language skills with additional pay would help address these inequities, fostering a more inclusive and supportive workplace environment. It would also encourage other employees to pursue language training, further enhancing the City's linguistic capacity over time.

While implementing bonus pay for bilingual employees represents an upfront cost, the long-term benefits far outweigh the expenses. Retaining skilled employees reduces recruitment and training costs associated with high turnover. Moreover, improved communication between civil servants and the communities they serve leads to greater trust in public institutions, increased resident satisfaction, and more efficient service delivery.

Lastly, I strongly believe that providing bonus pay for bilingual civil service employees is a strategic investment in New York City's workforce and the communities. It addresses the dual challenges of workforce retention and equitable service delivery, ensuring that all residents have access to the resources and support they need. By addressing the City's great need for bilingual staff, bonus pay will not only strengthen the workforce but also enhance the quality and equity of public services.

I urge the Committee to prioritize this initiative and take decisive action to implement a bilingual bonus pay policy for civil service employees.

Thank you for considering this testimony. I am confident that this measure will not only improve workforce retention but also enhance the quality of public services in our great city.

Sincerely,

Nicolas Alberto Escobar

**Bronx Resident and City Employee**

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 1/27/2008

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dalbanis K Powell

Address: 2510 Westchester Ave, 207

I represent: United Professional Fire Association

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Appearance Card

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Date: 1/27/25

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Name: Jeilin Montes

Address: Hempstead NY

I represent: Landfill Distribution + Fuel Service Joint Board

Address: 703 Mr Carter Hwy Newark NJ 07102

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: Robert Alexander

Address: Assistant Commissioner for Examinations

I represent: NYC DCAS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: Kadian Cutar

Address: Assistant Commissioner for Workforce Operations

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: NYC DCAS

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**(PLEASE PRINT)**

Name: Katrina Porter

Address: Chief Human Capital Officer

I represent: Deputy Commissioner of Human Capital

Address: NYC DCAS

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: 1/27/2025

**(PLEASE PRINT)**

Name: Gesha A. Archila

Address: [Redacted] NY 10566

I represent: Lundry Distribution Joint Board

Address: 703 McCarter Hwy Newark NJ

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: 1/27/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Megan Chambers

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ NY NY 10040

I represent: Laundry Distribution + Food Service Joint

Address: 703 McCarter Hwy Newark NJ Board  
07102

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: 1/27/25

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Name: Daniel Bilik

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Office of Labor Relations

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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 in favor  in opposition

Date: 1/22/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Leon Johnson

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Self

Address: \_\_\_\_\_