



Dawn M. Pinnock
Acting Commissioner

Barbara Dannenberg
Deputy Commissioner
Human Capital

Introduction

Good morning, Chair Miller, and members of the Civil Service and Labor Committee. I am Barbara Dannenberg, Deputy Commissioner of Human Capital at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, also known as DCAS. Today, I am joined by representatives from the Office of Labor Relations (OLR) and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), two sister agencies that have been critical partners to DCAS throughout the pandemic in helping shape the City's workforce policies.

Throughout the pandemic, we have been diligent in providing expert guidance on safety protocols in the workplace, based on the expert advice of our City's doctors and in alignment with city and state regulations. During the lockdown, the City quickly operationalized a teleworking system, and in the return to office, the City took the necessary steps to keep our employees safe: a vaccine and mask mandate, widely available personal protective equipment (or PPE), and optimized ventilation, among other safety measures. Throughout, City employees kept our City running, and their work has been invaluable to keeping us safe and healthy, and to driving our recovery.

Creating Safe Workplaces

This administration has been working daily to ensure that workers and workplaces are safe. This has been achieved through close attention to city and state regulations, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (or CDC) guidance, and consultation with the City's medical experts at the Department of Health.

The City has protected its workforce using the same core principles health experts have recommended since the early days of the pandemic - masking, improved ventilation, hand washing, keeping distance where possible, staying home if sick, and testing - but we now have the most powerful tool of all: vaccination. And as our health experts and others worldwide have advised, vaccines - particularly when combined with these other precautions - prevent transmission and severe illness and save lives.

This summer, the Mayor announced the vaccination requirements for City healthcare and public health workers, and from there, we "climbed the ladder" as he says. We now have a vaccine mandate for all City employees, and as the Mayor announced just last week, the City is implementing a private sector vaccine mandate as well. In addition to getting vaccinated themselves, our workforce - across multiple agencies - has been vital to helping New Yorkers get vaccinated as well. Nearly six million New Yorkers are fully vaccinated today - or about 70% - which further helps protect our workforce when they are at work in the community, in the grocery store, or at home with their families.

In February 2020, DCAS issued a leave guidance for the pandemic. It has seen ten iterations, to stay up to date on the latest developments around COVID-19. We believe giving employees excused leave —to recover from COVID-19 in quarantine, to be vaccinated, to take their children to get vaccinated, to take

care of a loved one in quarantine or isolation, or to support a child due to school closure—has provided flexibility and created a workplace that allows employees to care for themselves and their loved ones while stopping the spread of COVID-19.

In April 2020, DCAS issued a directive requiring employees to wear a face mask when interacting with the public and other employees. DCAS Commissioner's Directive 2020-1 now requires that every City employee able to medically tolerate a face mask must properly wear a face mask while they remain in a shared indoor City workspace. A shared workspace is a communal or open office setting where individuals cannot be separated by a closed door. The only exception is when someone is actively eating or drinking or has been granted a reasonable accommodation.

As you may recall, on June 19, 2020, DCAS—with support from OLR, DOHMH and the Law Department—issued formal guidance and protocols to all City agencies on managing the office in the age of COVID-19. The administration continues to update the guidance, the most recent version having been released on October 21, 2021.

The administration's approach focuses on core categories:

- Preparing buildings.
- Preparing workspaces.
- Preparing the workforce.
- And maintaining clear and consistent communication.

In addition to the development of policies and procedures geared toward creating a safe and healthy workplace, this administration has also made available necessary personal protective equipment. This includes the distribution of more than 4 million bottles of hand sanitizers, 340 million face coverings and over 300 thousand items of cleaning supplies since March 2020.

Mandates

This administration, like many state and local governments, has done an effective job of utilizing vaccine and face covering mandates as tools to ensure continued workplace safety.

The DOHMH Commissioner's Order Requires COVID-19 Vaccination for incumbent City Employees and Certain City Contractors. The New York City vaccine mandate requires that all other City employees must provide verification that they are vaccinated against COVID-19. This mandate continues to remain in effect. Further, since August 2, 2021, the City has required by Executive Orders 75 and 76 that all new hires provide proof of vaccination before beginning their employment.

Since early 2021, the City has maintained a supportive environment for its employees to be vaccinated. Vaccination sites are accessible, and appointments are easily scheduled. Employees are entitled to take up to four hours of paid time off to be vaccinated, and to accompany dependent children to get vaccinated. This excused leave time is also available for booster shots. In addition, employees who are fully vaccinated are eligible for three hours of compensatory time off.

If a covered employee has a medical condition or a religious belief that prevents them from complying with the vaccine mandate, they can and should speak to their agency's EEO officer regarding a potential reasonable accommodation, which are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. An employee may appeal a denial via Citywide panel or in some cases, through arbitration.

Those City employees who have not requested a reasonable accommodation and are in violation of the order have been placed on leave without pay until they either comply or separate from City service. Based on collective bargaining agreements reached with 27 unions, most City employees may elect to resign or retire and receive an enhanced payout of their sick leave days or extend the length of the unpaid leave.

As of today, the percent of vaccinated City employees is 94 percent. Each agency tracks compliance for their covered employees. Employee vaccination information is considered confidential medical information under the Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, and is also a type of identifying information protected under the City's privacy law. This information is kept private and secure and is only shared with designated agency staff and City officials.

To ensure that the City policies are well-understood and implemented by agencies, DCAS holds regular meetings with the agency personnel officers (APOs) on a near-weekly basis. During these meetings, our colleagues from OLR, FISA-OPA, the Law Department, and City Hall are active participants and provide guidance in their respective areas of expertise. These forums provide a venue for agencies to gain additional insight and guidance on the latest policy updates, ask questions, and share information.

DCAS has also held quarterly meetings with the EEO officers of City agencies and provided critical training on issues related to the vaccine mandate, such as reasonable accommodations.

Conclusion

As always, I would like to thank Chair Miller, members of this committee and your colleagues for your continued support. I look forward to discussing these policies to keep our communities and City employees safe. Thank you, and I welcome your questions.



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Jumaane D. Williams

**TESTIMONY OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS
TO THE CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE & LABOR**

DECEMBER 13, 2021

My name is Jumaane D. Williams and I am the Public Advocate for the City of New York. Thank you Chair Daneek Miller for leading this important hearing.

On December 6, Mayor de Blasio announced a vaccine mandate for private businesses, effective December 27th of this year. I welcome this much-needed safety measure, which will apply to approximately 184,000 businesses citywide. Mandates in other sectors have played a major role in increasing the city's vaccination rates, and amid the uncertainty of the Omicron variant and the certainty of holiday travel and gatherings, this step can help save lives.

I am also glad that the Mayor has expanded the requirement under existing mandates to full vaccination rather than a single dose. As incomplete protection is not nearly enough amid rising cases, I have been in public support of this action since the emergence of the Omicron variant. It is now incumbent upon the administration, in the next days and weeks, to advise and aid our city's businesses on issues of implementation and enforcement that have not been adequately explained.

While New York City will now benefit from these policies, which build upon earlier measures that we've implemented, I am concerned that New York State is lagging behind. The requirement of vaccination screenings for business patrons has been in effect in New York City since August 17th of this year. However, as the State and other counties have chosen not to enact vaccination screenings for business patrons, we have seen areas outside of New York City experience severe spikes in cases. While the State's December 10th announcement of an indoor mask mandate is a positive step forward, it is not sufficient to address the current conditions. Amid the holiday season, as people travel across the state and the majority of gatherings move inside, it is critical that the Governor implement vaccination screenings statewide. We have the tools and the capacity to prevent another deadly surge of the virus, now we must have the will to use those tools, the urgency to act now, and the spirit of solidarity to protect our fellow New Yorkers.



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Jumaane D. Williams

I'd also like to take a moment to acknowledge that we are not doing nearly enough to support our small businesses who have had to endure an extended period of challenging and shifting circumstances during this pandemic. Nor have we done enough to support their workers who have put their health and safety on the line to keep New York City functioning. I am hopeful that in the incoming legislative session that the Council will take up two priority bills that my Office has introduced—[Int. 1990](#), which would require the Department of Small Business Services to create an interest-free loan program for small businesses, non-profit organizations, and freelance workers forced to close or operate at reduced capacity due to the pandemic, and [Int. 800](#), which would require private employers with five or more employees to offer 80 hours of paid vacation time per year. We can and we must emerge from this pandemic with both a thriving small business sector and strengthened workforce protections.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



**Testimony of the Association of Legislative Employees (ALE) to the
New York City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor**

Delivered by Daniel Kroop, President, ALE
December 13, 2021

Good morning Chair Miller and members of the Committee, and happy holidays. My name is Daniel Kroop, and I am the newly-elected President of the Association of Legislative Employees, or, ALE. ALE is the New York City Council's union, representing nearly 400 staff. We are the country's largest union of legislative aides.

We present this testimony in solidarity with all workers, in particular our public sector union siblings, who have served New Yorkers with courage and dedication throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Like workers in transit, healthcare, grocery stores and schools, Council staffers also played our part in keeping New York City running during the darkest days of the pandemic. Member aides have provided direct services to thousands of constituents in need, as well as vital legislative support. Finance analysts supported passage of two balanced, on-time City budgets. Staff were infected with COVID-19 during this period, and tragically, one aide died in April 2020. It is important to note that many member aides have been reporting to District Offices since July 2020 to serve our communities, some working five days a week in person.

We extend our thanks to Speaker Corey Johnson and his staff for their ongoing cooperation and dialogue with ALE. We applaud the Council's more careful return to office for central staff, unlike Mayor de Blasio's rushed return for City workers, which has led to burn out, an exodus of talent from City agencies, and the feeling of unsafe workplaces.

Looking forward to 2022, our top priority is building a strong line of communication between the next Speaker and every Council staffer, whether they work in District Offices or 250 Broadway. We are one Council community, and should have one set of rules and standards that is clearly communicated. The next Speaker should ensure that every Council staffer has received a copy of the most current COVID health and safety plan, with a clear way to raise any issues or concerns.

The Council's vaccine mandate demonstrates the Speaker's authority to ensure health and safety for all staff. With this authority established, the Speaker's office should partner with ALE to update and communicate workplace safety rules, monitor implementation, ensure accountability when issues arise, and transparently report back. No one Council Member office is an island. Union members and shop stewards in every office can and should be allies in COVID safety. Joint union-management safety walk-throughs in offices would also be a smart step, as 34 new Council Members begin next session and the Omicron variant is spreading rapidly worldwide.

ALE also encourages the Council to pursue voluntary alignment with the New York State HERO Act, which helps control airborne transmission of COVID-19. Although the public sector is excluded from the Act, agencies and the Council should voluntarily adopt these standards.

The City owes a huge debt of gratitude to public servants who have served New Yorkers throughout the pandemic. As collective bargaining agreements come up for negotiation, the City must take swift and serious action to support us. That means prioritizing, at minimum, cost-of-living adjustments that keep pace with 6.8% inflation, the highest in my lifetime, and full staffing in agencies and Council offices depleted by hiring freezes and attrition.

One positive from the pandemic has been the shattering of the old norm of "5 days a week in the office." An internal ALE survey showed overwhelming support for maintaining at least some ability to work remotely. At the same time, there is no substitute for certain in-person activity, which requires strong safety guidelines. I urge the Council to support caregivers, promote mental health and well-being, and ensure continuity of operations in the face of any future emergencies by formalizing remote work policies next session.

On behalf of ALE, we look forward to a continued dialogue with you to ensure the New York City Council leads from the front on workplace health and safety, and helps advance that mission for workers citywide. Thank you, and I am happy to take your questions.



Testimony by Irene Lew, CSS Policy Analyst

December 13th hearing on COVID-19 Safety Protocols in the Workplace

Before the NY City Council Civil Service and Labor Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Irene Lew and I am a policy analyst at the Community Service Society of New York, a nonprofit organization that works to advance the upward mobility of low-income New Yorkers. We have supported the expansion of protections and benefits for low-wage workers, including a key role in efforts to pass the paid sick days law in New York City. Today, my testimony will be focused on the need to improve public outreach around the city's paid safe and sick leave law, and to expand sick leave to app-based gig workers and other workers misclassified as independent contractors. These measures are key to reducing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and improving the public health of all New Yorkers.

Improve public outreach around the paid safe and sick leave law

Seven years after the city's paid sick days law took effect, data from our [2021 Unheard Third survey](#) shows that 42 percent of low-income workers covered under the law say that they still don't receive paid sick time from their employer, more than double the share of those with moderate to higher incomes. Covered low-income workers least likely to have paid sick leave now include those at greatest risk for contracting COVID-19 or being denied their rights: part-time workers, immigrants, those employed in face-to-face industries with frequent exposure to the public and those working for smaller businesses. Less than half of covered low-income workers with jobs in face-to-face industries such as restaurant, hotel and construction reported receiving paid sick leave, compared to other industries (e.g. professional or administrative services), where nearly two-thirds of those who are employed received paid sick leave. We found especially large disparities in access to paid sick leave between full-time and part-time workers: only 32 percent of low-income part-time workers said that they received paid sick time, compared to 73 percent of those working full time.

The Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP), to its credit, has ramped up its public education and enforcement efforts in recent years, especially during the pandemic. In 2020, DCWP held nearly 200 worker-focused public education events and resolved 18 COVID-related sick leave violations that led to \$42,000 in restitution for workers. But [low awareness](#) of the city's paid sick leave policy persists nonetheless, and may be preventing New Yorkers from exercising their rights under the law. According to the 2021 *Unheard Third*, half of low-income workers we surveyed still haven't heard about the city's paid sick time law. This includes 47 percent of low-income workers in face-to-face industries and 52 percent of immigrant workers who are unfamiliar with the law. Low-income part-time workers are also three times less likely than those working full time to have heard a lot about paid sick days. Increasing awareness of new labor standards is a critical part of employer compliance because

enforcement is largely complaint-driven and workers unaware of their rights are much less likely to file a complaint against their employer.

For this reason, we urge the City Council to pass [Intro 1797](#), a bill that would require DCWP to produce posters for voluntary ongoing display at pharmacies and health care locations around the city informing New Yorkers of their right to paid sick leave. These locations are a key interface point where workers access healthcare and can be made aware of this fundamental right, especially during a pandemic. The bill would also invite the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation to distribute and display these posters at its locations. With New Yorkers continuing to visit health care locations, clinics and NYC Health and Hospitals sites for COVID-19 testing and vaccinations, Intro 1797 would institutionalize a simple, low-cost way to get the word out and target the information to the right people at the right time. Furthermore, we recommend that DCWP prioritize outreach and enforcement for smaller businesses and those in face-to-face industries to ensure that employers are aware of the law and in compliance.

Expand sick leave to app-based gig workers and other misclassified workers

We also urge the city to pass [Intro 1926](#), which would expand the definition of an employee under the city's paid sick leave law to cover gig workers and other workers misclassified as independent contractors who have been excluded from this important workplace standard. Our *Unheard Third* survey found that 54 percent of workers dependent on app-based gig work as their main source of income said that they lacked paid sick leave, compared to 24 percent of other conventional employees who said they lacked this key benefit. CSS's [previous research](#) on the app-based gig workforce has highlighted the consequences they face when they work without a single paid sick day: nearly 4 out of every 10 app-based gig workers we surveyed last year reported that they or a family member had been infected by COVID-19. Furthermore, a sizable share of the app-based gig workers we surveyed are in favor of stronger workplace protections as a pathway to economic mobility: in 2021, nearly a quarter of low-income New Yorkers dependent on app-based gig work selected stronger workplace protections as a top measure for helping them get ahead, four times higher than the share of other low-income workers.

With new COVID-19 cases linked to the new highly contagious Omicron variant of COVID-19 surfacing in New York City, raising awareness of the city's paid safe and sick time law and expanding coverage of the law to gig workers and other misclassified workers is more important than ever for protecting public health and preventing another surge of COVID-19 infections this winter.

**Testimony of
Gloria Middleton, President
New York Administrative Employees
Local 1180
Communications Workers of America,
AFL-CIO**



**Committee on Civil Service & Labor
Hearing on COVID-19 Safety Protocols in the Workplace
Monday, December 13, 2021**

Good morning/afternoon Committee Chair Miller, committee members, and City Council members.

My name Helen S. Jarrett. I am the Mobilization Coordinator and an Executive Board member of Communications Workers of America, Local 1180. I am here today testifying on behalf of President Gloria Middleton, who at the last minute was unable to attend but sends her apologies.

CWA Local 1180 represents almost 9,000 active City administrative and private sector workers, and close to 6,000 retirees. COVID-19 Safety Protocols in the Workplace has become one of the most important topics for union leaders as our members return to in-person work.

It goes without saying that the transition back to in-person working has not been an easy one. Despite many rules, regulations, and procedures, a great majority of my members were still scared to return to work. Our phone lines were flooded daily at the start, and our emails continue unbounded now, with members who have questions and concerns. To this day, members continually report of instances where these city mandates are not being implemented ... or implemented enough.

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You have asked the question, “is labor working collaboratively with the administration on updated, in-person workplace policies?” I believe the more appropriate question to ask is whether the **current city administration** is working

collaboratively with **labor** on updated, in-person workplace policies?

And we ALL know the answer to that!

It's not a matter of whether the current city administration has communicated critical workplace policy updates to municipal employees. After all, we all know that the mayor has **definitely communicated** critical workplace policy updates ... from a podium ... in front of the media ... with zero warning to the entire New York City labor movement. Remember that? I'm not so sure one would call that [quote] effectively communicating to the labor movement, however.

The bottom line is that bringing back 350,000 plus municipal workers all at once – in most cases to close, confined working spaces – without having included labor on policy implementation – was wrong. And it has now led to serious issues.

While I could give you dozens of examples in my union alone, time does not permit. So, I will just give you a couple of instances in which the city's so-called reasonable accommodation scenario did not even work during the peak of the pandemic. If it didn't work then, how can we expect it to work now?

In early April 2020, a member who was pregnant at the time and working at Woodhull Hospital, requested a reasonable

accommodation to work from home or another location.

EEO, in consultation with her director, denied her that accommodation despite H+H having others who worked from home who did not request a reasonable accommodation. While this member's work could have been performed from home, EEO said it would have caused a burden to the department. She ended up having to switch departments, unbeknownst to her director, to have a safe working environment.

Another one of my members has been charged by Woodhull Hospital, also H+H, with being AWOL since May 2020. While on the job and wearing a mask, she almost passed out and was sent home by employee health services. She returned to work with a note from her doctor stating that she was

unable to breathe well while wearing a mask for the entire day. Employee health services did not clear her to return to work and she was again sent home. They told her to apply for a reasonable accommodation, which she did. It was denied because of unstated conversations that the EEO officer had with her director, although the denial email said it would be a burden to her department. Her job? To review charts from a computer program! Now how exactly would it be a “burden” to her department if she reviewed charts while tele-working?

We fully understand the scope of what’s involved in preparing and maintaining all the building and offices, the HVAC and water systems, the restrooms and elevators, hallways, workspaces, shared spaces, and reception areas,

monitoring face coverings and health screenings, notifications, and quarantines ... and everything else that's involved in living and working in a pandemic.

But this is **EXACTLY** why union leaders should have been involved in the initial planning stages of how and when municipal employees were going to return to work. And honestly, if the city was able to fully function with a great majority of employees tele-working during the peak of the pandemic, then there is **NO REASON** it cannot ... and should not ... consider some form of hybrid tele-working scenario now to minimize the number of employees working side by side in confined spaces when new variants of COVID-19 continue to pop up, infecting even those who are fully vaccinated.

As political leaders, as government agency leaders, and as union leaders, we have the **responsibility** to make sure those we represent are taken care of and protected while on the job. We no longer can continue to operate under the business-as-usual method. If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it's that we **MUST** start thinking outside the box if we are going to succeed and thrive.

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Testimony of Professional Staff Congress/ CUNY
Health and Safety Committee to
the New York City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor

Oversight - COVID-19 Safety Protocols in the Workplace, December 13, 2021

Introduction

We, the PSC Health and Safety Coordinators, would like to comment on the COVID-19 protocol instituted by the City University of New York (CUNY). These protocols protect the 275,000 degree seeking plus 250,000 continuing education and certificate students (<https://www.cuny.edu/about/history/today/>), as well as the 30,000 staff and faculty who make up our own union, the Professional Staff Congress (<https://psc-cuny.org/about-us>).

When it comes to COVID-19, authoritative recommendations, whether from the CDC, the Harvard Healthy Buildings Program, or the developer of consensus ventilation standards, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), all agree on one thing: effective control requires a layered approach that includes at a minimum—vaccination, testing, face-coverings, contact tracing, and critically, air free of airborne virus which can be accomplished through ventilation or sufficient distancing. Our testimony addresses CUNY's failure to effectively provide the most basic of layers as we are well into our second year of the pandemic. They include:

1. CUNY's unwillingness to release ventilation data, requiring us to submit a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request, only to discover that the data is not nearly what is needed for risk reduction as recommended by ASHRAE.

We call upon CUNY to assess the ventilation in the spaces in which we work, and make room-level data publicly available.

2. CUNY's waiting until November 2021 to rollout a randomized surveillance testing program and once in place, requiring people to test only at a CUNY site presumably to maintain data quality. Yet, if those same people become ill with what they suspect is COVID, they are prohibited from using those same CUNY sites and must travel off-campus to be tested. Those that do not test within the prescribed time are barred from campus until they provide negative tests, a practice that is confusing because it conflates the criteria for entry to CUNY sites with the data-gathering functions of the surveillance testing.

We call upon CUNY to provide the randomized surveillance testing program needed to monitor COVID-19 infections by implementing positive incentives based on education of the CUNY Community about the benefits of such monitoring.

3. Many campuses are doing a poor job of contact tracing, including telling members that they should not disclose a positive test to co-workers or students they may have exposed. A lack of close contact is the explanation most often provided for limiting tracing yet there is no definition for what constitutes "close contact". This situation results in frustration, rumor, and hearsay about possible positive COVID-19 cases.

We call upon CUNY to create stringent guidelines for contact tracing and full disclosure of cases of COVID to all potentially exposed students, faculty and staff; and insist that these guidelines reflect current science and are adhered to consistently across all campuses.

4. The deplorable state of many buildings

The PSC's Health and Safety Committee trained "Watchdogs" – worker activists – to conduct health and safety walkthroughs throughout the summer and continuing this fall. Enormous disparities were found in health and safety conditions across CUNY. On some campuses, staff are working in buildings without any HVAC systems – often they are told to rely on open windows for ventilation, an unacceptable solution, especially during the winter. Other buildings have inadequate or poorly maintained HVAC systems. Leaks are reported in buildings across the CUNY system, resulting in mold that is being inadequately remediated, sometimes with chemicals that are causing severe allergic reactions. Rodent infestations have also been widely reported.

We note that some of the worst conditions are being reported at campuses serving the highest percentages of black and brown students – evidence, if more was needed, of the long-term effects of racist austerity funding.

We call upon CUNY to allow remote work for all faculty and staff in all buildings that lack ventilation systems that meet recognized standards for reduction of risk due to airborne aerosols, including percentage of outside air, air changes per hour, and minimum MERV 13 filtration.

5. People being forced to go back to work in these conditions (70/30 for spring)

CUNY is standing by its requirement that 70% of classes should be held in-person in Spring 2022, and that staff should also return to work, despite having shown that they can effectively do their jobs while working remotely. Given the lack of data on ventilation, the urgent need for repairing and upgrading ventilation systems, and the lack of consistently applied standards for social distancing, masking, and contact tracing, and failure to take into account the uncertainty created by the emergence of a new Covid variant, this inflexible guideline increases the risks to the health and safety of faculty, staff and students.

We call upon CUNY to withdraw its 70/30 requirement for Spring 2022, and create guidelines for campuses that reflect the changing public health situation, as well as the needs of faculty, staff and students for greater flexibility and safety as they continue to maintain all the functions of the university system.

6. Lack of timely communication about policies, and the changing covid situation.

Throughout the pandemic, communication from CUNY has been unclear, late, and inconsistently applied across all campuses. While other colleges in the Northeast are taking steps to reduce the spread of the Omicron variant (such as cancelling in-person exams and events, and requiring booster shots for all students), as of the date this testimony is written (Dec.16, 2021), CUNY has yet to issue any communication mentioning Omicron. In addition, CUNY has failed to take the lead in requiring and amplifying the state's mandate for vaccination of employees.

We call upon CUNY to immediately inform faculty, staff and students as to how the university will respond to the current changing conditions, and enforce guidelines for masking, social distancing, testing, contact tracing, and vaccination.

7. Many of the points above raise serious questions about how CUNY is using public funds, especially #1, #2, #4. We wholeheartedly support the request by the CUNY Board of Trustees for an additional \$413 million in the next budget, and we demand that CUNY spend a significant amount of any additional funds on ensuring the safety and health of employees and students.

We call upon CUNY to prioritize spending on making capital investments that prioritize buildings with inadequate or non-existent HVAC systems, structural deficiencies that are resulting in water damage, and are in need of mold remediation; this investment is necessary not only due to current pandemic conditions, but also for prevention of health issue in the future.

Conclusion: CUNY has fallen short in its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy workplace.

Jean Grassman

Jacqueline Elliot

Susan Fountain

Carlos Parker

Coordinators, Professional Staff Congress/CUNY Health and Safety Committee

Dec. 2, 2021

Dear Councilmembers,

I'm Patricia, a student at the CUNY Graduate Center here in New York. For the past couple years I've been organizing with the broad-based NYC coalition in support of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers – an award-winning human rights organization that works to protect farmworkers from abusive conditions in the agriculture industry.

I urge this committee and its chair, Council Member Miller, to set a hearing and vote on Res. 1156. This resolution, introduced in 2019, calls on fast food company Wendy's to join the Fair Food Program. This is an internationally recognized workplace-monitoring program proven to eradicate human rights abuses from the agricultural industry. Wendy's is the only major fast food chain still holding out; its competitors McDonald's, Taco Bell, Burger King, and others have long joined. As this committee is aware, farmworkers are among the most vulnerable essential workers in our economy. The Fair Food Program has been essential to protecting farmworkers' rights during the pandemic. So that Wendy's joins now, to advance and strengthen these protections, is more urgent than ever.

Resolution 1156 currently counts on 28 co-sponsors in City Council. My fellow New Yorkers and I have done our part by ensuring that our Councilmembers come on board. Now it's time for this Committee to do its part and bring this resolution to a hearing as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Eeman Bhalli

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: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DR Celia Quinn (Deputy Commissioner Disease Control)

Address: NYC DOHMH

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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Date: _____

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Name: SILVIA MONTALBA

Address: _____

I represent: DCAS

Address: 1 Centre St., NY

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Barbara Dannenberg

Address: DCAS

I represent: DCAS

Address: _____

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____
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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Steven Ettannari

Address: DCWP

I represent: _____

Address: 42 Broadway 8FL

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/15/21

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Steven Banks

Address: NYC Office of Labor Relations

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YC

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 1/2

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DANIEL KROOP

Address: _____

I represent: ASSOCIATION OF LEGISLATIVE

Address: 180 MAIDEN LANE, NY, NY

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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: 12/13/21

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Irene Lew

Address: _____

I represent: Community Service Society of NY

Address: 633 Third Avenue

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THE CITY OF NEW Y

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: HELEN S. JARRE

Address: 6 HARRISON STREET

I represent: GLORIA MEDDINGTON

Address: S/A JA

Please complete this card and return to the