

District Manager's Report April, 2021

Mayor's Office Reported:

Mayor Bill de Blasio recently announced the launch of the City Cleanup Corps (CCC), a New Deal-inspired economic recovery program to directly create 10,000 jobs and make New York City the cleanest, greenest city in the United States.

Announced in the Mayor's [Recovery For All of Us plan](#), the New York City CCC is modeled after the New Deal's U.S. Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which hired thousands of unemployed Americans from across the country to improve public lands, forests and parks during the Great Depression. The federal stimulus passed by President Biden and Democratic majorities in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate will be used to fund the program.

Hiring will begin this month (April), with 1,000 New Yorkers hired this month. More than 7,700 positions will be posted in July and build to 10,000. Hiring will take place across 10 different City agencies, including Department of Parks & Recreation (Parks), Department of Transportation (DOT), New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The CCC will immediately get to work revitalizing New York City's public spaces and neighborhoods, beautifying parks and green spaces, and bringing art to the city's open spaces. This will include a citywide graffiti removal campaign, pressure washing sidewalks, designing murals, tending to community gardens, and maintaining Open Streets.

The CCC's work will focus on key areas identified by local communities and elected officials, business districts, and the 33 neighborhoods hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic as identified by the City's Taskforce on Racial Equity and Inclusion.

The CCC's official logo and poster, designed in-house, were inspired by Roosevelt-era New Deal imagery and the [original U.S. CCC logo](#).



Veteran Affairs Reported: Copayment Debt: Refunds, Forgiveness

American Recovery Plan also waives copayments through September 2021 copayments for medical care will be waived, refunded, or forgiven under the American Recovery Plan. If you're a Veteran who receives care through VA, here's what this means for you:

- If you received a statement with copayment charges from April 6, 2020, or later, we'll remove these charges. You won't need to pay them.

- If you already paid any copay charges from April 6, 2020, or later, we'll send you a refund.
- If you have unpaid copay charges from before April 6, 2020, you don't have to make payments until September 30, 2021. We won't add fees or interest or take other collection action on these charges during this time. But you can still make payments if you'd like. **Find out how to pay your VA copay bill.**

You don't need to do anything at this time to get a refund. We ask for your patience as we work to adjust statements and send refunds.

Copay charges will be waived They have also waived VA copayments for all medical care received between April 6, 2020, and September 30, 2021, and all prescription medications ordered between April 6, 2020, and September 30, 2021. We hope this will help Veterans and their families during this time.

Read More: Debt, copays, appeals, and other financial concerns (*Frequently Asked Questions*) American Rescue Plan (*VA News Release*)

DOT Reported: Starting on Saturday, March 27th, through Saturday, April 17th, the NYCDOT will pour concrete on the west sidewalk and roadway of Riverside Drive West. Lane closures will be necessary as per the schedule below. VMS boards will be placed at intersections. Traffic agents will be on side to direct vehicles. Traffic pattern will return to normal after work hours

Department for The Aging Launches "Ageless New York," a First-of-Its-Kind Media Campaign to Combat Ageism in New York City.

New York City Department for the Aging launched an anti-ageism campaign titled “Ageless New York”, which features older New Yorkers who defy ageist stereotypes and challenge City residents to rethink their views on aging. The campaign kicked off today, with an PSA ad unveiling in the East Village section of Manhattan.

The Ageless New York media campaign consists of a visual and **video PSA** and a website, **nyc.gov/AgelessNewYork**, where New Yorkers can learn more about ageism and how to limit it in their lives and communities. The campaign PSAs will run and air on Curb taxi monitors, NYC TV, LinkNYC boards, online digital ads, and bus shelters across the five boroughs. The goal of this campaign is for New Yorkers to question and rethink their views on aging and raise public awareness about ageism.

While aging is a natural part of life that affects all of us, there are many prejudices against people because of their age. Like racism and sexism, ageism carries negative stereotypes and can lead to discrimination. Ageism can take many forms, including prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory practices, or institutional policies and practices that harm older adults. Ageism affects not only individuals, it also affects the workplace, our economy, and our communities.

The real New Yorkers featured in the campaign are not defined by their age, but instead by their passions, work, goals and aspirations. The campaign's goal is for New Yorkers to question their own views on ageism and reframe their views on aging — learn to see the individual first and not the age.

The real New Yorkers in the campaign include a marathon runner, a business owner, a social worker, a musician, and a nonprofit CEO who started his organization after retirement. In

addition to the visual and video PSAs, the campaign includes a website, nyc.gov/AgelessNewYork, where residents can learn more about ageism, its effects and how to become involved in combatting ageism.

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

The Summer Youth Employment Program has re-opened for 2021 and is accepting applications for young people, ages 14 -19. The deadline to apply is April 23, 2021.

- Participants will be paid weekly at the New York State minimum wage of \$15.00 an hour and may work up to 25 hours per week for six weeks in July and August.
- Jobs may be in-person, remote or a hybrid of both.
- To apply to the program, applicants can visit www.nyc.gov/dycd and follow the links to fill out the application online or download a paper copy. Paper applications can also be obtained from one of the community-based organizations or providers operating the program. A complete list of authorized SYEP providers can be found on the DYCD website (www.nyc.gov/dycd).
- Organizations interested in being a worksite and employing youth should [fill out this form to sign up](#).

HRA Reported: “Pay It Off” Extended Through April – Child Support Debt Reduction

The Pay It Off Child Support Debt Reduction Program began on March 1 and was originally scheduled to run through March 31 — we have now extended the program through April 30. Pay It Off allows noncustodial parents to reduce their child support debt owed to the New York City Department of Social Services (NYC DSS) twice as fast. For this limited time, noncustodial parents can get qualified payments matched dollar for dollar.

More information can be found at nyc.gov/payitoff for details. We have also created a brief informational video for the program [here](#).

How Pay It Off Works:

1. Noncustodial parents sign the [Pay It Off Agreement](#) and send it in with a copy of their photo I.D. before or on April 30, 2021. They can return it by EMAIL TO: dcse.cseweb@dfa.state.ny.us.
or by MAIL TO:
Office of Child Support Services
Pay It Off
PO Box 830
Canal Street Station
New York, NY 10013

2. Between March 1 and April 30, 2021, noncustodial parents:
 - Make one or more payments that total at least \$200 toward their child support debt permanently owed to the New York City Department of Social Services (NYC DSS) under federal and State law. If they have a current child support order, only payments above their court-ordered monthly amount can be applied toward NYC DSS child support debt for a payment match.
 - Pay by online payment system, certified check, personal check, money order, credit card, or debit card.
 - Get their qualified payment(s) of at least \$200 matched dollar for dollar, up to the amount they permanently owe NYC DSS. HRA’s Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) will send them a summary of actions taken 4 to 5 weeks later.
3. Non-custodial parents who enroll in Pay It Off can find out if they are eligible for additional reductions to their NYC DSS child support debt, including a one-time sign-on reduction of up to \$1,000 and the potential to get up to \$5,000 reduced if they qualify for the Arrears Credit Program. The Arrears Credit Program Agreement can be downloaded at nyc.gov/ocss-debt-reduction.

[This flyer](#) explains what forms of payment we accept and how to pay.

The OCSS Customer Service Office is closed and cannot be directly reached by telephone. If a client wants to speak with an OCSS staff member, they can request a telephone appointment by sending an email to dcse.cseweb@dfa.state.ny.us. Clients should include their case number, contact information, and, in the subject line, the reason for their inquiry or that they are “requesting a customer service appointment.” If their request for a telephone appointment is about the Pay It Off program, clients should write “Pay It Off” in the subject line of their email. Updates can be found at our website at www.nyc.gov/hra/ocss.

Clients can also call the New York State Child Support Helpline at 1-888-208-4485 (TTY: 1-866-875-9975), Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–7:00 PM, to request a call back from their local child support office.

Health Bucks and Get the Good Stuff Expansion

The City has received a \$5.5 million federal grant through the Fund for Public Health NYC to help increase access to nutritious foods. With the Health Department and its partners contributing matching funds, this represents an \$11 million investment which will provide the following:

- Farmers Market customers will receive \$2 in Health Bucks for every \$2 spent in SNAP benefits, up to \$10 in Health Bucks per day representing a doubling of the current purchasing power (\$2 for every \$5 spent).

- New York City’s innovative grocery store-based fruit and vegetable incentive program, [Get the Good Stuff](#), will be expanded to additional stores.

For more information about the Health Bucks and Get the Good Stuff programs, visit [nyc.gov/health](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/nyc-farmers-markets.pdf). To find a farmers market near you, you can text SoGood to 877-877 or visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cdp/nyc-farmers-markets.pdf>.

Department of City Planning (DCP) Reported: City Council Speaker Corey Johnson and Department of City Planning (DCP) Director Marisa Lago recently announced a partnership to update and expand the [Food Retail Expansion to Support Health \(FRESH\) program](#), to bring convenient, accessible grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods and New Yorkers – a need further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Created in 2009, DCP’s FRESH program uses a zoning incentive to give property owners the right to construct slightly larger buildings in mixed residential and commercial districts if they included a FRESH supermarket. It also allows grocery stores as-of-right in light manufacturing districts, increasing the locations where they can be built. In partnership with the City Council, DCP will expand the FRESH zoning incentive (LINK to high-res map) to 11 additional lower-income Community Districts throughout the City (including Staten Island for the first time), on top of the 19 districts where it already applies.

The FRESH program currently applies to:

Bronx Community Districts 1 through 7
 Brooklyn Community Districts 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 16 and 17
Manhattan Community Districts 9 through 12
 Queens Community Districts 12

With this update, the FRESH program will be expanded to:

Bronx Community Districts 8 and 9
 Brooklyn Community Districts 1, 2, 12 and 13
 Queens Community Districts 1, 3, 4 and 14
 Staten Island Community District 1

DCP’s proposed updates to FRESH would also:

- Add specific criteria an applicant must follow to create a new FRESH store near an existing location. Some communities have seen clustering of FRESH supermarkets, making it difficult for them to prosper. These new criteria would limit the potential for oversaturation.
- For renovations to an existing building to construct a FRESH supermarket, building owners will no longer have to replace existing walls with windows – removing a potentially expensive step in the process.

- Provide a waiver from parking requirements for sites using up to 10,000 square feet of retail area in lower density residential districts

Since the program launched, 28 projects have been approved for FRESH zoning incentives, out of which nine are currently open to the public.

Separately, the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) [offers a variety of tax breaks](#) for both for FRESH supermarket operators and developers that provide a FRESH store in their buildings. Twenty-two supermarkets have been approved for FRESH tax incentives – creating over 1,000 new jobs and representing an investment of \$100 million into the City’s economy. The tax incentives also kept other FRESH stores open and in business, retaining more than 600 jobs.

DCP’s proposed FRESH expansion is only for the building increase through zoning, not the EDC tax incentive, as eligibility for the latter is limited by State statute based on income and employment data from the Census Bureau.

FRESH is being expanded because a [2018 DCP analysis](#) showed that many neighborhoods remain underserved by high-quality grocery stores, emphasizing the need to expand and bolster the program. DCP also recently launched the [Supermarket Needs Index](#), an interactive map that informs communities of nearby grocery stores and supermarket – and shows what neighborhoods remain underserved.

NYC Rent Board Reported: Assistance Submitting Eviction Moratorium Hardship Forms [Right to Counsel](#), [Housing Justice for All](#), and [JustFix.nyc](#) have launched a [new website](#) to help tenants submit their hardship declaration forms online. [EvictionFreeNY.org](#) provides an accessible, easy to use format that ensures tenants can take full advantage of the temporary protections provided by the State law.

Employment Opportunities:

The City and State are both hiring for vaccine-related positions. The City’s [Vaccine for All Corps](#) is looking to hire people particularly from hard-hit communities and industries. No health care experience is necessary for roles in vaccine site management, operations, and client services; the Corps is also hiring for clinical roles. Click the following link to apply through the Dept. of Small Business Services. <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/careers/careers.page>

The State is hiring for clinical and non-clinical roles at vaccine sites. See openings at <https://www.tempositions.com/nys-vaccination-jobs>

The Senior Summer Employment Program (SSEP) application process for Summer 2021 is now OPEN until 11:59pm on Thursday, April 15th. Accepted applicants will provide payroll information and be matched to employment opportunities available for our senior residents.

Each eligible participant will earn \$15 an hour for up to 120 hours within the program period.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Be 55+ years of age
- Live in West Harlem (MCD9*)
- NY State ID
- Social Security Card
- Available to work for up to 120 hours from June 1st through July 30th 2021

**MCD9 Boundary – 110th to 155th Streets from the Hudson River to an eastern boundary along Manhattan, Morningside, St. Nicholas, Bradhurst, and Edgecombe Avenues.*

If you meet the eligibility requirements, contact the West Harlem Skills Training Center office at 646-518-4760 or send an email to josem@westharlemdc.org or aruiz@westharlemdc.org.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Eutha Prince
District Manager**