



November 13, 2025

Testimony of Robert Tucker, Commissioner, FDNY

“Introduction 521 – Separating EMS from the Fire Department”

Good afternoon, Chair De La Rosa, Chair Restler, and members of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations. My name is Robert Tucker and I am the Commissioner of the New York City Fire Department. I am joined today by John Esposito, Chief of Department; Paul Miano, Acting Chief of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Lizette Christoff, Deputy Commissioner for Management and Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss Introduction 521, which would separate EMS from the FDNY.

Let me start by stating clearly that I understand the intention behind this proposal. The sponsors want to improve pre-hospital care in this city to save more lives – a sentiment that I wholeheartedly share. So I want to begin my testimony by thanking the members of the Council for your attention to the current difficulties facing EMS — because it is this issue that I think about first thing each morning when I wake up, continuously throughout the day, and when I am lying in bed each night. FDNY emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and officers are the lifeblood of EMS. They are real-life superheroes who put their own lives on the line to provide care for the rest of us, often times when we are in moments of our greatest need. The legislation that we’re discussing today is meant in some way to improve the circumstances of those EMTs and paramedics and to enhance their compensation. That’s a topic that I care very deeply about. In my time as Commissioner, I’ve been privileged to have numerous conversations with

councilmembers about that topic, and I have found it helpful to brainstorm solutions. In particular, I've had very productive conversations with Chair Ariola and Chair De La Rosa about overcoming the current challenges facing EMS.

Unfortunately, Intro 521 is not a solution to these challenges. Separating EMS from the Fire Department is a misguided suggestion that would not solve the problems of EMS. Instead of improving capabilities and enhancing the compensation of EMS members, this legislation would accomplish precisely the opposite. It would make EMS *less* effective, *less* efficient, and it would put EMS members in *worse* circumstances.

The EMS unions are currently in negotiations with the Office of Labor Relations on a new contract. Creating a new agency would not change the existing dynamics of working out a contract through collective bargaining with the Office of Labor Relations.

And for those of you who have gotten to know me, you know that I bring a specific set of skills with me to this job. Prior to joining government, I was the CEO of a successful family business focused on public safety and as your FDNY Commissioner, I often take a CEO style approach to running the department which typically begins with finding ways to eliminate redundancies, create efficiencies, and improve our overall output for the public.

However, the proposal that the Council is considering today would be enormously costly for the City and divert a significant portion of funds needed to improve operations towards redundancies and fiscal waste. After all, why pay administrative costs twice if it's only necessary to pay them

once? To put it bluntly, instead of seeking efficiencies and putting this funding directly towards improving EMS operations, this legislation would have the opposite impact that the sponsors intended.

By separating EMS from the Fire Department and creating a new standalone agency, the Council would be imposing a slew of redundant costs on the City and, ultimately, on the taxpayers. It takes a small army of dedicated individuals behind the scenes to run the greatest Fire and Emergency Services agency in the world. Data analysts, compliance officers, and budget specialists all would need to be duplicated in a new agency. Auditors and engineers and community coordinators. Radio shop techs and executive staff. Construction project managers and contracting and procurement officers. Human Resources costs would be duplicated. Legal Affairs costs would be duplicated. Communications costs would be duplicated. Strategic planning and data analytics would be duplicated. And all of this would need to be created at enormous cost to the City, whereas, if used appropriately, those scarce resources could go directly towards improving the availability of prehospital care for our nine million residents.

And for these extensive added costs, this change would leave the people of New York with diminished EMS services. The costs of repairing facilities and maintaining our fleet of vehicles – which is one of the most extensive in the city – would be entirely duplicated. The City would lose the efficiency that we have now in consolidated fleet shops and shared specialists such as mechanics who shift between fire apparatus and EMS apparatus. Out of service time for vehicles would skyrocket.

I also worry that creating a gap between Fire and EMS would endanger the seamless integration of services and care. While their duties and training are distinct, they all play a critical role delivering services. EMTs and paramedics work side by side with firefighters at emergencies every single day. EMTs operate at fires and firefighters operate at medical emergencies. That close relationship is critical not just to members of the public but to the EMTs, paramedics, and firefighters themselves. A firefighter who is injured at a fire knows that he or she is going to be assisted by fellow firefighters and then immediately receive the best possible care from highly trained members of EMS who are already on-scene as part of the department's emergency response protocol. I say it all the time: the FDNY is one big family, made up of firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, and civilians. I speak to members of both Fire and EMS operations every single day, all of them take immense pride in wearing the iconic patch of the greatest emergency response agency in the world. A separate EMS agency would undoubtedly endeavor to provide greater care, but removing that synergy and forcing a divorce of fire and EMS services would have unintended consequences that would make our members and the public less safe. It will also needlessly complicate civil service and promotional opportunities within the department and leave both agencies recruiting new members from the same pool of candidates.

In closing, our shared objective is clear — to provide the highest standard of emergency care to every New Yorker, every day. But with a finite number of resources, duplicating functions and creating new layers of bureaucracy will not get us there. So today I am asking the Council to reject this legislation. Instead, let's work together to make real improvements to EMS and real improvements to the care that we provide for the people of New York. Thank you for your attention to this topic. I would be happy to take your questions at this time.

New York City Council
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
Committee on Civil Service & Labor

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

Int. 1261 -- Pay Differentials for paraprofessionals

November 13, 2025

Good morning, Chair De La Rosa and Chair Restler, and members of the Committees. I am Daniel Pollak, First Deputy Commissioner at the Office of Labor Relations. I am also joined by Peter Ianniello, Executive Director of the Division of Human Resources at New York City Public Schools. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today on Intro. 1261, establishing a new pay differential for paraprofessional employees employed by the Department of Education.

Intro. 1261 provides for a payment—roughly estimated at \$10,000 in Year 1—to DOE paraprofessionals, based on a complicated formula that compares the starting salary for DOE paraprofessionals to the highest salary for principals over the past 20 years. The payments are forecast to increase each year.

OLR believes that this bill would undermine the collective bargaining process that has been in place for a half-century. As you may be aware, since 1967, the City has been obligated under the New York State Public Employees' Fair Employment Act—commonly known as the Taylor Law—to bargain wage rates with its municipal unions. The payments that are the subject of Int. 1261, like other pay items and terms and conditions of employment, are mandatory subjects of collective bargaining under the Taylor Law. This means that the City and DOE must negotiate these matters with its unions, and these benefits cannot be imposed by local law. Specifically, in the 2007 case of Mayor of City of New York v. Council of the City of New York, the Court of Appeals stated: “the Taylor Law prohibits local legislative bodies from usurping the executive's prerogative to agree with unions on terms and conditions of employment.” 9 N.Y.3d 23, 31.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I will address any questions you may have.

Testimony from State Senator Kristen Gonzalez in Support of Intro 1261

Chairs De La Rosa and Restler, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of Intro 1261, a bill that will bring much needed pay parity and respect for paraprofessionals in the Department of Education. I am Kristen Gonzalez, a State Senator representing the 59th District which includes parts of Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan. I am also the proud daughter of a paraprofessional and know first hand how hard they work to serve students in our schools.

Paraprofessionals are teaching assistants who provide additional guidance and support in classrooms, especially to students with disabilities and in early childhood education settings. They are responsible for serving students with the highest needs and taking on some of the most challenging tasks in the classroom. They are the ones who assist students with physical disabilities getting to their classrooms and appointments, who help emotionally regulate students with behavioral issues, and who provide translation services and other one-on-one instructional time so each student can reach their full potential. Without paraprofessionals, the 23.2% of students, over 188,000 people, who have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) would not be able to receive the services they are legally entitled to.

Paraprofessionals are the backbone of our classrooms, yet they are among the lowest paid workers. Due to the low pay and emotionally challenging work, the DOE struggles to hire and retain qualified paraprofessionals. At one point, there were almost 1,400 vacancies for paraprofessionals. These vacancies make it harder for students to access resources, and add additional strain on the existing staff.

Intro 1261 would address the growing pay disparity for paraprofessionals and acknowledge the important role they play in creating safe and nurturing educational environments. I want to thank Council Member Powers for introducing this bill and the Council for considering this important legislation. I encourage you to take action to support paraprofessionals.



Testimony from Michael Mulgrew, UFT President, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Michael Mulgrew, and I am the president of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). On behalf of the over 200,000 members in our union, especially the 26,000 paraprofessionals, I thank Chairs Carmen De La Rosa and Lincoln Restler, as well as the members of the Civil Service and Labor and Governmental Operations committees, for holding this hearing today.

On Jan. 30, 2025, I stood on the steps of City Hall with members of this City Council as they proposed legislation to provide paraprofessionals with an additional \$10,000 annually. In the months since that announcement, the UFT has advocated tirelessly for the “RESPECT check” legislation to become law, gaining the support of council members, borough presidents, the public advocate and Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani, who has pledged to support this bill when he takes office. This legislation has received so much support, not just because it’s time to fix the unjust pay gap that has arisen for paraprofessionals due to the city’s use of pattern bargaining, but because for all of us, this is deeply personal.

Anyone who has ever worked in or attended a New York City public school has felt the profound impact of a paraprofessional, including me. I began my teaching career as a special education teacher at William E. Grady Career and Technical Education HS in Brooklyn, and I was lucky enough to work with a classroom paraprofessional who taught me what it meant to go above and beyond for our students. At that time, most special education students graduated with IEP diplomas, which were based on meeting IEP goals, rather than passing Regents exams. This paraprofessional believed that our students could take the Regents and graduate with the same diplomas as their general education peers. She dedicated her free time to helping our students prepare for the Regents, coming to school early each morning and working through her lunch periods. She poured her heart and soul into ensuring our students succeeded, and I will never forget that.

This is just one of the many stories of the remarkable work that paraprofessionals do daily. Paraprofessionals give more than just their time and energy to our students. They often use their own money to buy whatever their students need, including winter coats when children come to school without them or a child’s favorite food to celebrate developmental milestones. They spend more than they get through Teacher’s Choice just to make sure their students have the school supplies they need. During the COVID-19 pandemic, paraprofessionals kept classrooms running so learning did not stop. When teachers were unfamiliar with how to use Google Classroom or run breakout rooms on Zoom, paraprofessionals showed them so that they could teach and students



could learn. Although schools were practicing social distancing, that wasn't an option for paraprofessionals who needed to be next to their students to change and feed them. We recently averted a bus strike in New York City, but if we hadn't done so, I guarantee it would've been paraprofessionals who showed up to accompany their students to and from school each day.

Paraprofessionals are not required to do all this, but they choose to because from the moment they meet their students in September until the end of the school year, they treat their students as their own. However, that choice comes with personal sacrifice.

The truth is paraprofessionals are not paid enough to survive in New York City and are being pushed out of the profession they love. Many paraprofessionals are working two to three jobs because it's too difficult to survive on their Department of Education salary alone. Others have left the profession entirely. Some have moved in with family members or are sleeping in homeless shelters because they are unable to pay their rent. This is shameful, especially when it is within the city's control to change this reality.

The paraprofessional shortage we face has been created by the city's adherence to the practice of pattern bargaining — giving percentage-based raises to employees. Although contractual raises increase everyone's take home pay, pattern bargaining has put the Department of Education's lowest-paid workers at a disadvantage. Under pattern bargaining, the same percentage wage increase translates to vastly different dollar amounts for different titles. A 3% increase for a starting paraprofessional is roughly \$900, while for the highest-paid school-based administrators it is roughly \$6,500. This disparity is only compounded over time. From 2005 to 2025, the starting salary for a paraprofessional has gone up by \$12,000, while the salary for the top school-based administrators has gone up by \$86,000. This gross pay gap is the reason that we are unable to recruit and retain enough paraprofessionals within our schools.

To get ourselves out of this predicament, we must do two things. First, to address the acute paraprofessional shortage at hand, we must pass the "RESPECT check" legislation, which was carefully crafted to fall outside of collective bargaining. Paraprofessionals need economic relief now. If things continue as they are, we will lose even more paraprofessionals, putting our most vulnerable students in danger of missing out on the education they are legally entitled to and deserve. This \$10,000 check will improve recruitment and retention efforts, making the position more attractive to prospective educators and making it possible for our current paraprofessionals to stay in their current roles. It will also send the message that we recognize, value and appreciate these educators who devote themselves to their work and our students daily.



Second, we must break the city's reliance on pattern bargaining. At the start of last school year, the UFT found that there were at least 1,600 paraprofessional vacancies throughout the city. Later, the Department of Education confirmed that that number was closer to 3,000. We immediately began hosting hiring fairs and helping candidates navigate the complex hiring process. As a result of these efforts, hundreds of paraprofessionals were nominated and hired, yet we still have many outstanding vacancies. Until we fundamentally change the way we pay paraprofessionals, we will never have enough of these educators in our schools.

It's time to properly fix the paraprofessional shortage in New York City and to show our appreciation for the essential workers who keep our schools running and our students safe, cared for and inspired. We must pass the "RESPECT check" legislation today to begin moving in the right direction once and for all. Thank you for holding this hearing and I look forward to working together to support paraprofessionals.

Testimony from Michael Mulgrew, UFT President, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Michael Mulgrew, and I am the president of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). On behalf of the over 200,000 members in our union, especially the 26,000 paraprofessionals, I thank Chairs Carmen De La Rosa and Lincoln Restler, as well as the members of the Civil Service and Labor and Governmental Operations committees, for holding this hearing today.

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teachers were unfamiliar with how to use Google Classroom or run breakout rooms on Zoom, paraprofessionals showed them so that they could teach and students could learn. Although schools were practicing social distancing, that wasn't an option for paraprofessionals who needed to be next to their students to change and feed them. We recently averted a bus strike in New York City, but if we hadn't done so, I guarantee it would've been paraprofessionals who showed up to accompany their students to and from school each day.

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It's time to properly fix the paraprofessional shortage in New York City and to show our appreciation for the essential workers who keep our schools running and our students safe, cared for and inspired. We must pass the "RESPECT check" legislation today to begin moving in the right direction once and for all. Thank you for holding this hearing and I look forward to working together to support paraprofessionals.

Testimony from Priscilla Castro, Chapter Chairperson for the UFT Paraprofessionals, before the City Council Committees on Civil Service and Labor the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Priscilla Castro, and I am the chairperson of the Paraprofessional Chapter at the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). I represent 26,000 paraprofessionals who work in New York City Public Schools every day. On their behalf, I want to thank Chairs Carmen De La Rosa and Lincoln Restler and the members of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations for holding this hearing. Today, I am full of hope that we are about to take an important step toward providing paraprofessionals with the recognition they so deserve.

I cannot express how much the “RESPECT check” legislation has meant to my colleagues and me. The day that Council Member Keith Powers introduced the bill in April, we were filled with gratitude and disbelief. To reassure my members that yes, this was real, I printed out copies of the legislation and handed them out at our next chapter meeting. The possibility of an additional \$10,000 annually felt like a lifeline and an opportunity for the financial freedom so many of us need.

I have proudly served as the chair of the paraprofessional chapter for the past three years. During this time, I have been inspired and moved by the work of my fellow paraprofessionals, who show up with dedication and love for their students daily. But I’ve also felt heartbroken as I have listened to the stories of paraprofessionals who have struggled to make ends meet.

As it stands now, the take-home pay for a paraprofessional is often as little as \$1,000 every two weeks. To pay rent, buy groceries, clothe one’s children and stay afloat with this sum is nearly impossible in any city, let alone one of the most expensive cities in the world. I’ve received emails and phone calls from paraprofessionals living in homeless shelters because they cannot afford to pay their rent and from others who don’t get home until 10 p.m. because they are working two or three jobs. Many of these educators are forced to resign from the job that they love, not because they want to, but because they have to in order to survive.

This is unacceptable. We cannot allow the educators who devote themselves to our most vulnerable children to suffer because of the noble and necessary career path they chose.

We also cannot afford to lose more paraprofessionals than we already have. Although the Department of Education has refused to provide us with the exact number of paraprofessional vacancies this school year, we know that the number is likely in the thousands. All these vacancies put our students and schools at risk.

Without paraprofessionals, school becomes an unsafe and daunting environment for students with mental and physical disabilities. These students rely on paraprofessionals to ride the school bus with them, feed them, change them, encourage them and support them throughout the day. For students and families whose home languages are not English, multi-lingual paraprofessionals are their bridge to the school community. They enable families to communicate with teachers and administrators about their children and how they are faring at school. Teachers also depend on paraprofessionals. When students experience emotional distress or frustration in the classroom, it is the paraprofessional who calms them down so that the teacher can complete their lesson and dedicate time to the other students in their class.

The role of the paraprofessional is vital to the school community, and the cost of losing even more of them will be much higher and more damaging to our students than providing them with an extra \$10,000 each year. To make certain that our schools have enough paraprofessionals, we must pass the “RESPECT check” legislation.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity to speak about the experience of paraprofessionals in New York City. I urge you to vote in favor of Int. 1261 and ensure that there are still paraprofessionals in our schools in the years ahead.

**Testimony from John Kamps, 2nd Vice Chairperson for the UFT
Paraprofessional Chapter, before the City Council Committee on Civil
Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State
& Federal Legislation**

My name is John Kamps, and I am the 2nd vice chairperson for the Paraprofessional Chapter at the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). I would like to thank Chairs Carmen De La Rosa and Lincoln Restler, as well as the committee members, for holding this hearing today. I am grateful for the opportunity to speak in favor of the paraprofessional “RESPECT check” legislation.

Paraprofessionals are often described as an extra set of hands, and it’s true that we are willing to jump in and assist with anything and everything. However, we are so much more than that. We are an essential part of the school system.

Paraprofessionals make sure that students get on the school bus every morning and are changed and fed throughout the day. We calm and support over-spirited students so that teachers can devote attention to the other children in their classrooms. We slow lessons down and reset our students when they get frustrated to ensure that they keep moving forward. And, although this work is difficult, it is worth it. The best feeling in the world is getting to watch a student begin to understand something after struggling and to see the glimmer in their eyes. It is this feeling and the love for our students that keeps paraprofessionals in our profession, even if it means we and our families have to make sacrifices.

While the Department of Education has not disclosed the exact number, we know that we are short a couple of thousand paraprofessionals in New York City. This shortage forces us to take on multiple jobs within the school building, creating challenges for paraprofessionals and students alike. Rather than caring for just one student, we are often left to look after three to four additional students. For students who need a 1:1 paraprofessional, this causes them to fall even farther behind since they don’t get the undivided attention they need. And it leads to paraprofessional burnout.

Many paraprofessionals also work additional jobs outside of the school building. Members of our chapter work as many as three jobs just to keep their heads above water financially. And still, they find a way to show up for their students every day with care and dedication. We are willing to take on extra work, but there is only so much we can take before it takes a toll on us and our families.

For many paraprofessionals, the mental and financial stress that comes with this position is untenable, and they leave the profession altogether. While no one can blame them for making that decision, this creates a vicious cycle. The more paraprofessionals that we lose, the more work there is for those who remain in the profession, making it more likely that they will leave too. We need to break this cycle, and passing the “RESPECT check” legislation is a crucial step in the right direction.

This “RESPECT check” would give paraprofessionals across the city a sense of relief and the ability to take a deep breath. It would allow us to put more food in the refrigerator, potentially work two jobs instead of three, throw our child a birthday party and spend more quality time with our families. This additional \$10,000 would encourage paraprofessionals to stay in schools and attract new educators to our profession as well. It would show that the essential service we provide is appreciated and recognized.

Additionally, making the “RESPECT check” a reality would prove that the city is listening to us – its constituents. Last spring, members of the UFT paraprofessional chapter had the privilege of meeting with our City Council representatives to share what this “RESPECT check” would mean to us. We had the chance to explain what a paraprofessional actually does throughout the day. Seeing council members’ names appear on the list of bill sponsors after we spoke with them made us feel proud that we had used our voices and they mattered. It assured us that we were seen, and it felt so empowering to be heard. Now, as I speak at this hearing today, I feel reassured that our stories made an impact. I urge you to vote in favor of the “RESPECT check” to further prove that constituents’ voices do, in fact, make a difference. Again, I thank you for holding this hearing and listening to the paraprofessionals of this city.

Testimony from Anthony Barnes, Assistant Secretary for the UFT Paraprofessional Chapter, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Anthony Barnes, and I am the Assistant Secretary for the UFT Paraprofessional Chapter. Imagine every time you get paid, you're still behind because your pay doesn't cover the cost of living. Imagine walking to and from work because you didn't have enough left from your paycheck to buy a weekly Metro Card. Imagine your lights are turned off by Con Edison because, again, you couldn't keep up with your bills or your payment plan. Imagine not being able to pay your bills on time, to boost your credit score, or to move to a safer and bigger place for your family. Imagine keeping this all to yourself because you're embarrassed that you have a professional job that doesn't treat you like a professional.

I experienced those things as a paraprofessional who has worked in schools for more than 30 years, and, unfortunately, paraprofessionals still get caught up in the "never having enough money scenario". The RESPECT check would mean relief and satisfaction for thousands of New York City paraprofessionals. This money will relieve members of many burdens that can be solved by simply having more money. It will mean they can pay their mortgages, get the roofs and floors in their homes fixed, and get their broken cars fixed. This money could be saved and invested and put towards a down payment for a home or a child's college tuition.

This RESPECT check will start to make up for the disrespect we have endured by those that do not see us as important educators or see us as someone who can easily be replaced. This RESPECT check will greatly close the gap between the lowest-paid paraprofessionals and the top-paid school administrators. It's time to show up for paraprofessionals like we show up for the children in the New York City public school system every day.

Testimony from Christi Angel, President of the Citywide Council for District 75, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Christi Angel. I am the president of the Citywide Council for District 75, and I'm here alongside the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and the families, educators and advocates of District 75, who are standing up for our city's most vulnerable children.

Every day, paraprofessionals step into classroom environments that demand extraordinary patience, compassion and strength. They are the calm during a meltdown, the voice of comfort when a child is overwhelmed, and the steady hands that make learning and safety possible.

And yet, despite this sacred work, many earn just over \$30,000 a year. Even after 15 years, many still make under \$50,000. That's not a living wage in New York City. It's a moral failure. These are the people supporting our most vulnerable children, and they are among the lowest paid in the system.

I stand with the UFT and city council members fighting for a \$10,000 permanent annual increase for paraprofessionals. This isn't generosity. It's justice. It's how we show that we value the people who make inclusion and dignity possible for students with disabilities and complex needs. It's about valuing the people who lift up our children with disabilities, including our nonverbal learners, our medically fragile students and those who cannot feed themselves, and who walk into the toughest situations with steady hands and open hearts.

We have a shortage crisis. There are classrooms without enough support and children waiting for help that never comes. If we don't pay paraprofessionals what they deserve, we lose them, and when we lose them, our students suffer most.

So today, we're calling on our legislators to do the right thing. Pass the bill. Fund the increase. Close the pay gap. Because when we invest in paraprofessionals, we invest in stability, in safety and in every child's right to be seen and supported. Our students can't wait. Their paraprofessionals can't wait. Let's do the right thing — now.

Testimony from Tonia Calvo, Queens parent and paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Tonia Calvo, and I am the District 25 paraprofessional coordinator at the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). My journey began back in 2002, when my own child was referred for several special education services. At that time, I did not even know what the initials "EI" meant in the special education world. However, it did not take long to get acquainted with them. Fortunately, for me, my child was able to receive the services he needed to flourish, and I can say with all certainty that that would not have happened without his paraprofessionals.

He smiled getting on and off the school bus each day. He learned to do things that I did not think possible at the time. Speech was one of the services he needed, and he had difficulty telling me what he wanted. It was a frustrating time for all of us. He had several paraprofessionals in his classroom, and they would explain to me that he just communicated differently, using visuals and hand signals. He also had sensory issues that made a day at the park or eating a meal overwhelming. The paraprofessionals would encourage him to climb and jump at the park with his peers and snack time became a time to explore by touching and eating new foods. His teachers and academic experience were exceptional, but he thrived because of the nurturing and inspiration that he received from the paraprofessionals. They taught me, as a parent, that children do not learn in the same way, and that is ok. They taught him that it was ok to do things differently, and they did that because they performed their jobs with devotion and passion.

I will never forget their names: Eva, Yessica, and Bonchi, to name a few. What they did for him and all the other students in their classroom was invaluable, and this RESPECT check is just one way to show that.

In addition to my experiences with my son, I too am a paraprofessional. The aspect of my work that I am most proud of is the personal connection I create with the students. When I can make a child laugh because I understand them and can engage with them on a topic that is interesting to them, that makes my day. I am reminded of why my job is so important when I work with a child remotely and can sense that she is having a difficult time learning, and I say, "Let's take a break and watch Shimmer and Shine," her favorite show, and she lights up with wonder. Or when I suggest using colored pencils to do math just because it's fun, and the student looks at me like, "Wow, I can do that?"

If a student comes to school hungry, I go searching for something for them to eat in the cafeteria and suggest that we complete their work while they eat. When a child has

soiled herself and is ashamed to leave her desk to get changed, I coax her into going to the bathroom and encourage her to change herself — with assistance — so that instead of feeling helpless, she feels empowered. I love seeing the lightbulbs go off when my students learn something new, and I thrive off the fact that they trust me enough to support them during the school day. Gaining that trust takes patience and empathy. While our students come to school to learn their ABCs and 123s, there is more to the world than that. I believe that if I can get them to let me into their world, I will be able to amplify it.

To me, the RESPECT check means that the role of paraprofessionals in schools and classrooms is acknowledged and valued. It means that the work we do does not go unrecognized. We are not asking for this check because we want a pat on the back for a job well done. It's about recognizing the fact that without paraprofessionals, some students could not, and would not, be able to have a truly enriching and successful academic experience.

Testimony from Undrea Polite, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Undrea Polite. I am a concerned Brooklyn resident and New York City paraprofessional of 29 years. I spent 18 years as a paraprofessional representative and two years as a chapter leader. I am here to testify on behalf of Int. 1261, or the “RESPECT check” legislation, which would rectify some of the damage that the unfair practice of pattern bargaining has done to paraprofessionals.

Every year at my school, we have a Thanksgiving feast for the students. Normally, I would participate and budget money for it each year, even though I was not bringing home a lot of money. Two years after my father passed away, I couldn’t take part. I didn’t have the money to buy the extra food for the feast, pay my rent and pay my student loan payments for the month. This was one of the lowest moments in my professional life. I felt like I failed my students because I wasn’t financially able to participate. It was especially disappointing because I am the type of paraprofessional who would pay for my students to go on a field trip and buy them lunch if their parents didn’t have money. This \$10,000 would have helped me in this situation.

If this bill is passed, it would allow me the freedom to take care of my students and myself. I would never want anyone to feel the level of disappointment that I felt when I informed my principal that I could not partake in the feast. This “RESPECT check” would really help.

Thank you, Chair De La Rosa, Chair Restler and committee members for considering my testimony.

Testimony from Alisa Diallo, Brooklyn parent and paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Alisa Diallo, and I am a parent and paraprofessional. The paraprofessionals at my school have supported students by providing them with food when they are hungry. They have provided haircuts for the boys and salon appointments for the girls. They have taken students shopping for prom suits and dresses if their families were going through financial hardship. They have gone to laundromats to wash students' clothes. All of this was done with their own money. They never once asked to be repaid for their time and generosity.

Paraprofessionals deserve this RESPECT check because we are looking for a better future for ourselves and our families. We come to work, day in and day out, not knowing what the day will bring. We become mothers, fathers, shoulders to cry on, and ears that listen to the students we serve every day at our schools. We come to work every day, no matter how hard the day before was, because we love what we do, and we love the students who rely on us each day.

Testimony from Anika Branch, Brooklyn paraprofessional borough coordinator, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Anika Branch, and I am the Brooklyn paraprofessional borough coordinator at the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). To me, the paraprofessional RESPECT check represents more than just recognition — it would be a life-changing form of support. With the rising cost of living, rent, groceries and everyday expenses, it has become increasingly difficult to make ends meet. An additional \$10,000 would make a tremendous difference, allowing me to catch up on bills and provide more stability for my family. It would help relieve some of the financial stress that so many of us are facing and allow me to focus more fully on the work I love doing each day.

I am most proud of the relationships I've built with my students past and present. Seeing my students have that "aha" moment when they have struggled with a math problem and they can solve it on their own makes me smile. Knowing that I can be a source of encouragement, stability and understanding for them means everything to me. It brings me great pride to see my students reach their goals academically, socially and emotionally. Watching them grow, gain confidence and overcome challenges reminds me why this work matters so deeply.

Testimony from Anne Marie Cahill, Queens paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Anne Marie Cahill, and I am a paraprofessional in Queens. I am proud of the connections I make with the students. Seeing them light up when they understand what they're learning and watching them progress over the year is one of the best feelings in the world. The RESPECT check would mean everything. It would mean being able to pay debt, put a down payment on a house and feel respected for the work we do day in and day out.

Testimony from Brittany Vieux, Queens paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Brittany Vieux, and I am a paraprofessional in Queens. Paraprofessionals provide direct support to students with special needs, manage classroom routines and ensure every child feels seen, safe and included. Parents lean on us when they can't lean on administration or even the classroom teacher. We deserve this RESPECT check because we often wear many hats: tutor, mentor, counselor, nurse and cheerleader. We keep the classrooms running smoothly and help students succeed academically and emotionally.

Testimony from Chrissy Carone, Staten Island paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Chrissy Carone, and I am a paraprofessional on Staten Island. I'm most proud of helping students with disabilities feel included and valued. I've been a paraprofessional for more than 20 years, and I'm very proud of helping create a child's future by promoting independence and confidence. The role of a paraprofessional has shaped many students to be the best they can be.

The RESPECT check would show that paraprofessionals are appreciated and respected in this very important role of helping students achieve success. Paraprofessionals not only help encourage students, but they also teach important life skills to help shape them into responsible and caring adults.

We work hard every day to make students feel valued while giving them the tools needed to achieve academically. Paraprofessionals go above and beyond in their roles by assisting the teacher to achieve a successful classroom environment. As you can see, we work hard every day to promote an inclusive environment for all students and go beyond our roles without recognition. This RESPECT check would be life-changing for many of us, and we need to see this happen now.

Testimony from Courtney Black, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Courtney Black, and I am a paraprofessional from Brooklyn. I'm proud to be a voice for students who often don't have one. As a paraprofessional, I show up every day ready to meet every challenge, because I know my presence matters. My work helps bridge gaps and build confidence. It reminds students they're capable of great things.

Paraprofessionals are the backbone of New York City's public schools. We show up every day for the students who need the most care, patience and support — often being the first to arrive and the last to leave. Many of us work with students who have complex needs — providing one-on-one support, managing behaviors, assisting with academics, and helping create safe, inclusive classrooms. We do the work that keeps classrooms running and students thriving. Yet, despite our dedication, paraprofessionals remain close to the lowest-paid workers in the NYC Department of Education.

Too many paraprofessionals are forced to take on two or even three jobs just to make ends meet. We give our all during the school day and still must work nights and weekends to survive. That's not right. When we talk about the RESPECT check, it's not just about a check — it's about respecting the people behind the work. It's about fair wages, recognition and the dignity every educator deserves. It's time to respect the paraprofessionals.

Testimony from DeAnna Fico, Queens paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is DeAnna Fico, and I am a paraprofessional in Queens. I am proud of working with students who need my support and encouragement. High school can be a tough four years for some students, and I am so happy when they come to me knowing I will help them as much as I can. When they say thank you, it's genuine. That is why I became a paraprofessional and why I love it.

The RESPECT check would mean a great deal to me. I am a single mother raising two teenage daughters getting ready to go to college. The work I do as a paraprofessional is tough. It can be trying at times and really rewarding at times as well. The RESPECT check would reflect the time and effort I put in as a paraprofessional by showing up for my students, teachers and administrators.

Testimony from Dillon Kelly, Queens paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Dillon Kelly, and I am a paraprofessional in Queens. I'm proud of multiple aspects of my work. Nothing comes close to the feeling of seeing the impact that you have on one of your students' lives. I've had a handful of parents come to me to thank me for the work I've done with their child, sharing stories of new positive behaviors that they display at home, and it nearly drives me to tears every time. The District 75 population that I work with does not always make it easy for me, but I could not be prouder to be a positive influence in the lives of these students.

The RESPECT check would relieve me of an enormous amount of financial stress. I love my job as much as one could; however, between current bills and student loans, I'm struggling to exist currently. As a young man looking to start a life for myself and hopefully soon have a family of my own, being a paraprofessional is not paying me enough to support my goals. The RESPECT check would buy me more time doing what I love and keep my students around someone who genuinely cares about them.

Testimony from Elizabeth Gillespie, Queens teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Elizabeth Gillespie, and I am a teacher in Queens. Paraprofessionals have made me a better teacher by supporting me, challenging me and helping me grow in ways I never expected. Their dedication, insight and care not only uplift our students but also inspire me every single day to be the best educator I can be.

Paraprofessionals deserve the RESPECT check because they are the heart and backbone of every classroom. They are the steady hands and kind hearts that keep our students safe, supported and ready to learn. Without our paraprofessionals, lessons would not flow, students' needs would go unmet and classrooms would not shine with the same warmth, patience and care. Every small success, every smile, every moment of growth happens because of them.

Testimony from Elizabeth Incandela, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Elizabeth Incandela, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I am proud that I make the children feel connection, support, comfort and security. They know I am someone who truly cares about their feelings and who they are individually. I am always there for them day after day, no matter what. They feel this connection with me and when they are asked “who is the one adult in the building you trust to talk to if you have a problem?”, they immediately mention my name. I am proud of this, and it's very rewarding to know I have impacted their lives in such an important way.

The RESPECT check would mean getting what we deserve as paraprofessionals. I go above and beyond for my students. I do it with all my heart. Paraprofessionals do things beyond our specific role, always helping in any way we can and being true team players who always have the needs of the children as the number-one priority.

Testimony from Emily Szpunt, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Emily Szpunt, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I am most proud of how much I see my students grow and improve in the span of a year. There is a special joy in finding the right methods to help my students succeed.

The RESPECT check would mean so much. It would mean not living paycheck to paycheck. I would be able to fully pay off my credit card debt, and I could finally afford to take graduate classes to pursue a career in teaching. I have been putting my career in teaching on hold for years due to my inability to afford to take a single class. With my rent going up 12% during the Adams administration, it now takes almost two full checks to pay for my rent and bills.

Testimony from Erin Tripo, Staten Island teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Erin Tripo, and I am a teacher on Staten Island. Paraprofessionals are the backbone of our school community. They support our students in ways that go far beyond academics. In my classroom, paraprofessionals work side by side with teachers — providing one-on-one attention to students who need extra help, helping manage small groups and ensuring that every child feels seen and supported.

They are especially vital for our students with special needs. Paraprofessionals build deep, trusting relationships with these students, understanding their strengths, triggers and learning styles. Their patience, consistency and compassion help students feel safe and confident enough to take risks and grow. But their impact goes beyond the classroom walls. Paraprofessionals are often the first to notice when a student is struggling emotionally, is hungry or just needs someone to talk to. They bring heart, empathy and stability to our school every single day. They are valuable members of our school community because they make inclusion possible. They help ensure that every student — no matter their abilities or background — gets the attention, care and support they deserve. Our school simply wouldn't function without them.

Paraprofessionals absolutely deserve the RESPECT check because they play a critical role in education, often doing the same or similar work as certified teachers but without equal pay, recognition or stability.

Testimony from Evelyn Perez, Manhattan paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Evelyn Perez, and I am a paraprofessional in Manhattan. My passion for working comes from my heart and the love that I have for the future children of New York City. I am proud of so many things that I do from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. I am proud to be a helping hand for my students. I serve as a listening ear when they are having a hard time. I help them communicate, solve difficult situations and support their academics. Kids learn when they enjoy their environments and their space is full of inspiration, so I provide positive feedback in negative situations to make children smile and laugh. However, living in NYC is very expensive and hard. I'm also passionate about my daughter receiving an education, and I need to help her as well. The RESPECT check would mean a lot in many ways. It would make me feel appreciated and acknowledged for all the hard work I do.

Testimony from Fei Fei Ng, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Fei Fei Ng, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I am proud that I have such close relationships with the students because I am with them from Monday to Friday, from the first period to the last period. I am a mediator and a translator from English to Chinese between teachers and students. I also build relationships and work closely with parents, translating for them too. Students seek help and support from me, and I am someone who they can talk to.

The RESPECT check means so much to me. It is a reward, a motivation and recognition for what I do for the students every day as a paraprofessional. It tells others that it is what we deserve, and the work we do is not in vain. It will encourage me to continue working hard with the students at my school.

Testimony from Jacqueline Mehani, Queens paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Jacqueline Mehani and, as a library paraprofessional, I'm proud of the difference I make each day in helping students grow as readers and learners. I take pride in connecting them with stories that inspire curiosity, creativity and empathy and building a space that supports literacy and belonging. That's the part of my work that means the most.

Getting this \$10,000 "RESPECT check" means more than just money. It means recognition. For years, paraprofessionals have been the quiet backbone of our schools. We support students with disabilities, manage behaviors, translate, comfort, teach and do a hundred little things that often go unseen.

We do it because we care, not because it pays well. And for too long, that dedication hasn't been reflected in our paychecks. So, while this RESPECT check won't erase the years of being underpaid, it does feel like someone is finally saying, "We see you. We value what you do." It's a reminder that the work paraprofessionals do matters deeply, every single day, and that respect shouldn't just come in words, but in action.

Testimony from James Woodbury, Brooklyn teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is James Woodbury, and I have been a special education teacher, mostly in the 12:1:1 class setting, for 20 years. Paraprofessionals deserve the RESPECT check because they are the bedrock of special education. They travel with the class all day with only one period off for lunch. Paraprofessionals coach our sports teams, lead afterschool programs, keep us informed about what's going on in our students' lives. Their insight is invaluable to teachers. They observe teachers and give feedback that makes them better teachers. Simply put: Good paraprofessionals train new teachers. If it weren't for the veteran paraprofessionals I started with, I wouldn't be teaching anymore.

Testimony from Javier Marte, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Javier Marte, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I am most proud of the time I spent working one-on-one with a blind, autistic student. As we navigated the challenges of learning Braille together, with me teaching and learning alongside him, he became my greatest teacher. He showed me the incredible heights we can reach through determined effort and illuminated the profound, life-changing role a dedicated paraprofessional can play.

For paraprofessionals in New York City, the call for a RESPECT check is a demand for fundamental recognition. Our school system is overwhelmed and understaffed, and in this challenging environment, paraprofessionals are not merely assistants — we are the essential pillars that uphold entire classrooms. We manage behaviors, provide one-on-one instruction and offer emotional support that allows all students to thrive.

Testimony from Jenna Weinberg, Brooklyn teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Jenna Weinberg, and I am a teacher in Brooklyn. Paraprofessionals deserve the RESPECT check because they work with students who have the highest needs, offering support both academically and emotionally at the most complete level and developing deep and trusting relationships with their students. They deserve to be compensated with a living wage and more for their tireless efforts and professional contributions. Our paraprofessionals make all students feel seen, heard and cared for and especially help their students believe they can achieve at the highest level.

**Testimony from Jennifer Mateo Medina, Manhattan paraprofessional,
before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation**

My name is Jennifer Mateo Medina, and I am a paraprofessional in Manhattan. I'm most proud of the relationships I've built with students and how I've helped them grow academically and emotionally. Seeing a student gain confidence and succeed because of the support I've provided reminds me why I do this work every day.

Paraprofessionals are the heart of classrooms. We connect with students in ways that go beyond academics, offering encouragement, patience and care every single day. We are often quiet heroes who make sure no student feels left behind. A RESPECT check is not just about money, it's about recognizing our hard work, commitment and the difference we make in students' lives.

Testimony from Jennifer White, Queens teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Jennifer White, and I am a teacher in Queens. As a cluster teacher I work with every paraprofessional in our school. In every classroom, the paraprofessionals continue the work of the teacher, helping me keep the routine for behavior programs, running token boards, reinforcing on-task behavior, and knowing each child.

Paraprofessionals deserve this RESPECT check because they go above and beyond every single day. They teach small groups, change diapers, toilet train, feed children, make materials, reach out to parents, and work with cluster teachers, related service providers, and administrators. They do all this and anything else that is asked of them.

Testimony from Jenny Ramos, Bronx paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Jenny Ramos, and I am a paraprofessional in the Bronx. I am most proud of the relationships that I build with my community, including students, their families, and the school staff. It is a blessing to see the difference having a paraprofessional can make in a child's life.

The RESPECT check would mean my three children get to see their mother breathe. We wouldn't have to worry about how I'm going to keep a roof over their heads or food in their stomachs.

Testimony from Jillian Rodriguez, Bronx paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Jillian Rodriguez, and I am a paraprofessional in the Bronx. The aspect of my work that I am most proud of is being able to help children in need. I currently work with a child with autism, and although it can be challenging at times, it can also be very rewarding when I help him with various assignments or an academic challenge.

To me, the RESPECT check would mean further recognition for the hard work I do every day. This also motivates me to keep working for the NYCPS. In addition to being a paraprofessional, I am also a college student seeking a degree as a school counselor. With this check, I will be able to pay for my college courses more easily, which in turn would benefit the NYCPS, as I would feel more inclined to continue working for them.

Testimony from Jose Pagan, Bronx paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Jose Pagan, and I am a paraprofessional in the Bronx. I am most proud of the amazing connections I have built with students, coworkers and families of students; being part of a community and doing my part to help our youth; and helping students who may need a bit more assistance than others but deserve the chance to be great just like the rest. I am proud of being able to work within a classroom every day.

The RESPECT check would quite literally mean respect for my position within the school system. I wake up every single day and do my absolute best to assist my teacher and serve my students to ensure that they have a safe environment and quality education.

Testimony from Katherine Llaneras, Manhattan paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Katherine Llaneras, and I am a paraprofessional in Manhattan. I'm most proud of having my student(s) feel safe with me, having my student(s) learn and grow with confidence while achieving their set goals, and knowing parents see the positive change in their child at home and not just in the classroom.

The RESPECT check would mean paying my son's tuition faster and making sure my son has money in his school food account and money in his pocket for after school. It would mean helping me stay current on rent, utilities and food without stress.

Testimony from Kathleen McConnon, Bronx paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Kathleen McConnon, and I am a paraprofessional in the Bronx. I am most proud of the relationships I've built with the students. I am proud that I became someone they trust and depend on. Knowing that I can make a difference in a child's confidence and growth even in small ways means the most to me. I'm also very proud of the relationships I have built with the teachers and staff to create a loving, supportive learning environment for every child.

I would feel extremely grateful and valued in receiving the RESPECT check. Paraprofessionals work hard every day to support students' academic and emotional needs, going above and beyond the job description. Financially, the check would make a big difference in my life. I will have fewer monthly worries. The check would feel like recognition for the important role we play in education. It will motivate me to give even more to the students and school community.

Testimony from Leigh Milazzo, Staten Island teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Leigh Milazzo, and I am a teacher on Staten Island. The paraprofessionals at my school mold and shape the minds of all children. They assist in helping their own students but also serve as liaison with other students so that their students can be integrated into the classroom as seamlessly as possible.

Paraprofessionals deserve the RESPECT check because they are the backbone of our school system. They not only help to educate and guide our students, but they also play a vital role in ensuring their safety throughout the day.

Testimony from Liza Tenner, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Liza Tenner, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I have been a paraprofessional for over 30 years, and during that time I have had the privilege of working with students across many different grade levels and with a variety of needs, including autism, developmental disabilities and physical limitations. Each child has taught me valuable lessons about patience, understanding, perseverance and the power of encouragement.

One of my proudest moments came when I was with a student who struggled with communication and speech and often became frustrated during reading activities. Together, we spent many months breaking tasks into small, manageable steps and celebrating every bit of progress. The day that he spoke in a full sentence, he was smiling from ear to ear. Seeing his pride and confidence grow reminded me why I love what I do.

However, what makes me most proud is not just the single success. It's the understanding that, with the right support and belief in their abilities, every child can overcome some challenges and find their own way to shine. Being part of that journey and knowing I helped a student achieve something they once thought impossible continues to be the most rewarding part of my career.

The RESPECT check would mean a lot to me because it would show that I am just as important to the students as the teachers are. Paraprofessionals form unique connections with the students and play a great role in their day-day lives. Recognition of that effort would not only mean a great deal to me personally but would also reinforce the value of every role that contributes to student success. The RESPECT check would also help me purchase some much-needed sensory toys for our special needs students and benefit my family.

Testimony from Melanie Quiros, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Melanie Quiros, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I am so proud of watching the children I work with succeed academically and reach their goals. Without the help of a paraprofessional, I do not think these children will be able to learn.

The RESPECT check would mean a lot to me. I work very hard each day to help children in need succeed in their life. I can barely afford my rent with the pay I am earning. We deserve this RESPECT check for all the hard work and dedication we give every day.

Testimony from Melissa Vega-Ortiz, Queens teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Melissa Vega-Ortiz, and I am a special education teacher in Queens. I was a paraprofessional before and currently work closely with two in my classroom. Every day those paraprofessionals support me. They help my students focus on lessons, help them with schoolwork, and support them in all life skill needs. Without them, the school would not be able to work properly.

Paraprofessionals deserve the RESPECT check because they work so hard, and without them, I could not teach my class. They are the hardest-working people in the school.

Testimony from Mengying Yang, Queens paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Mengying Yang, and I am a language paraprofessional in Queens. We have lot of students who don't speak English. Every time I use their language and see a smile on their face and a thumbs-up from the teachers, it makes me so proud.

Paraprofessionals deserve the RESPECT check because we handle many important responsibilities that support teachers and students every day. The cost of living keeps rising, and the RESPECT check would reflect the hard work and dedication we bring to the job.

Testimony from Michele Ramos, Bronx paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Michele Ramos, and I am a paraprofessional in the Bronx. I'm most proud of being able to support my students, to ensure their needs are met and to encourage them to do their best. I'm proud to be their cheerleader, motivator, inspiration and voice when they are at a loss for words, as well as their listening ear.

Being a single mom of two, this RESPECT check would help with bills and being able to provide more for my daughters. Paraprofessionals work so hard and are the ones who spend the most time with the kids, yet our pay isn't enough to live on, especially after taxes. The RESPECT check would help not only me out but my loved ones as well.

Testimony from Michelle Girace-Kelly, Queens paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Michelle Girace-Kelly, and I am a paraprofessional in Queens. I'm most proud of the impact I have on students' growth and confidence every day. Whether it's helping a student grasp a new concept, encouraging them when they feel frustrated, or celebrating their progress, I take pride in being part of their journey. Working in a diverse NYC classroom also gives me the opportunity to support students from all backgrounds and learning styles, which makes each day meaningful and rewarding. The RESPECT check would help with the rise in cost of living in NYC.

Testimony from Michelle Lowe-Calixte, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Michelle Lowe-Calixte, and I have been a paraprofessional in New York City public schools for over 18 years. The aspect of my work I'm most proud of is the relationships I build with students — helping them gain confidence, overcome challenges and realize their potential. Knowing that I can make a difference, even in small ways, reminds me why I chose this profession and why I continue to give my best each day.

To me, the “RESPECT check” means recognition, appreciation and value for the vital role paraprofessionals play in supporting students and teachers every day. It represents more than just a check; it is about being seen as an essential part of the educational team, whose dedication and hard work directly impact student growth and success. This check would mean that my years of commitment, patience and care are acknowledged and respected.

Testimony from Migda Rodriguez, Bronx retired paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Migda Rodriguez, and I am a retired paraprofessional from the Bronx. I gave 23 years of dedication to District 75 — the hardest but at the same time most loving district. I would do it all over again. I dealt with mentally and physically challenged students of all ages. I have had many injuries while doing my job, but I did my job with a smile and my heart on my sleeve. I helped students become readers, writers, artists and chefs. I helped students learn to speak. At times I fed students or made sure my students with diabetes did not overload with sugar. I have worn many hats.

This RESPECT check would be a relief for 26,000 paraprofessionals when it comes to deciding whether they can pay their rent in full or go food shopping and be able to buy healthy foods like fruits and vegetables. Paraprofessionals are essential to the classroom, but our salaries do not meet the cost of living. Some people may ask why we don't become teachers. To which I say: Do you tell nurses to become doctors? We need to respect paraprofessionals.

Testimony from Milagros Ureña, Manhattan paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Milagros Ureña, and I am a paraprofessional in Manhattan. I love working with children, and love to see them grow, not only in their academics, but in their emotional and social skills. The aspect of my job I'm most proud of is seeing them grow through building positive relationships that help them achieve and build stronger characters as students. It's a great feeling to see them engage and become more independent individuals with a love for learning.

The RESPECT check will help me and my family make ends meet on a monthly basis. This also means that I won't have to have a part-time job outside my current job as a paraprofessional. It is time for our jobs as paraprofessionals to be acknowledged and respected since we are an essential part of classrooms. We are the motor that helps teachers do a better job since we work with the most vulnerable children in the classroom, which in turn helps other students learn. It helps the entire classroom be a place of learning.

Testimony from Moses Gonzalez, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Moses Gonzalez, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I'm proud of the connection I build with students — especially those who need a little extra patience, understanding and encouragement to see their own potential. Every breakthrough moment, whether it's a student finally grasping a lesson or simply choosing to stay in class instead of giving up, reminds me why I do this job. However, what I'm most proud of isn't a single accomplishment; it's the everyday moments when my students succeed, smile, or start to believe they can achieve something greater. That's the kind of success that keeps me coming back with the same energy and heart every day.

As paraprofessionals, we often work quietly behind the scenes, but our impact is anything but small. We help create safe spaces for students to learn, grow and believe in themselves again. I take pride in knowing that the time I invest — listening, guiding and showing up consistently — helps shape lives in a positive way.

The RESPECT check would mean validation — that the time, energy, and care I pour into my students every day truly matter. The truth is that the love we have for this work doesn't always match the compensation we receive. The RESPECT check would ease financial burdens for me and my family, but more importantly, it would send a clear message that the city values the vital role paraprofessionals play in education.

**Testimony from Myriame Gedeon, Queens speech language pathologist,
before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation**

My name is Myriame Gedeon, and I am a speech language pathologist in Queens. The amount of work that paraprofessionals do on a daily basis is very honorable. They connect with all kids at whatever level they're at and meet all of their needs. I am very grateful for the paraprofessionals that I have in my building. I also understand why there is a gap in how many paraprofessionals we need and how many we have. It's hard to find people to do the work because it isn't easy. Paraprofessionals deserve even more than \$10,000. I support and respect all our paraprofessionals.

**Testimony from Nickesha Thomas-Williams, Brooklyn paraprofessional,
before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation**

My name is Nickesha Thomas-Williams, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I'm proud of my ability to show up for my students, co-workers and parents daily as my genuine self. I love being someone that the students know is a safe place, that my coworkers know they can ask for help, and that parents know will communicate with them because I want the best for our children, like I do my own.

I love how I show up, but being the support for other people takes time and resources. The RESPECT check would mean that I could remain in my current position, and I wouldn't have to work two to three jobs to support myself and my family. With this check I could start to pay back student loans, I could dream again about owning a home, and I could afford to make healthier food options for myself and my family. I donate so much to my school and community. With this check, I could continue to do more without stress.

Testimony from Nicole Montella, Staten Island paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Nicole Montella, and I am a paraprofessional on Staten Island. I've been a paraprofessional for over five years. The best part of my job is being able to be part of a student's growth. Being able to see them overcome their struggles and knowing I was a part of that process is one of the most rewarding experiences.

I love working with students and being part of their growth, but the wages are simply not enough to live on. The proposed \$10,000 RESPECT check would make a huge difference for my family and me. It would help us cover basic expenses, catch up on bills and finally breathe.

Testimony from Nicole Schmidt, Queens speech teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Nicole Schmidt, and I am a speech teacher in Queens. Paraprofessionals go above and beyond to take care of the whole body of a student. They hold students when they cry, they feed them lunches if needed, they change their diapers, and they make sure the kids have a great day in school. They're helping students be their best selves. Some paraprofessionals come hours before and after school just to support teachers.

Paraprofessionals deserve the RESPECT check because they know students so well and can support them to reach their potential because they work so well with them. Teachers can instruct well, but paraprofessionals are the ones leading, assisting and sitting side by side with students.

Testimony from Niveen Ahmed, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Niveen Ahmed, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I'm most proud of the relationships I've built with my students. I love being someone they can count on, whether they need help understanding a lesson or just someone to listen to them. Seeing them grow, gain confidence and smile makes me proud of what I do every single day.

The RESPECT check would indicate that I am valued for all of the hard work and care I provide every day. As a paraprofessional, I work hard to help students learn and feel supported, and this check will demonstrate that our efforts are worthwhile. It's not just about money — it's about feeling valued and respected for the difference we make in children's lives.

**Testimony from Olga Flores, Queens parent, before the City Council
Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on
Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation**

My name is Olga Flores. My child loved her teachers, but it was the paraprofessionals she spoke of with so much love and respect. The paraprofessional she had in kindergarten helped her with writing, but even more so with social graces. My child is very generous and would give away her snacks. This one paraprofessional taught her to care for herself first and then for others, sharing what she had to a degree. This was a great life lesson.

The paraprofessional who taught my daughter math retired last Friday, and my daughter was there to thank her for all she taught her. Under her tutelage, my daughter's math grades went from ones and twos up to threes and fours. The support and self-confidence that she instilled in my daughter was phenomenal.

These paraprofessionals made such an impact on our lives that my child is now a paraprofessional in a special education class with plans to obtain her teaching degree. I am so proud of my child and her educational vocation. She wants to make a difference in children's lives, as her paraprofessionals did for her. Talk about coming full circle. Thank God for these special beings that impart such knowledge, support, respect and love to our little ones. Paraprofessionals most certainly deserve all the RESPECT checks for their hard work.

Testimony from PeterJoshua Roman, Manhattan paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is PeterJoshua Roman, and I am a paraprofessional in Manhattan. I am proud that I make a difference in students' lives. I am proud that I am a valuable asset to not only students, but to parents and staff as well. I am proud to see the positive impacts and influences I have on students, staff and parents alike. However, I have been a paraprofessional for almost eight years, and I still cannot afford to live on my own. The RESPECT check would mean I can finally afford this ridiculously expensive city, pay bills and live comfortably.

Paraprofessionals are expected to be everything for students. We are responsible for supporting students' education, health, social emotional development and well-being. A lot is thrown at us and expected of us and yet we feel underappreciated. If we did not exist in schools, teachers, principals and staff would not be able to successfully complete their jobs. It's time for us to be recognized as more than bodies in the classroom. We are the foundation of education.

Testimony from Philip Gagnon, Brooklyn teacher, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Philip Gagnon, and I am a teacher in Brooklyn. Paraprofessionals deserve the RESPECT check because they are essential workers. They are not only valuable to our students' educational success but are mandatory in terms of local and federal laws. As a teacher in a District 75 school, I work with paraprofessionals every instructional period of every school day. Without their support, our students with special needs would not be able to succeed.

Our paraprofessionals also breathe life into our school community. They often ride the bus with our students, so they form relationships with parents and community members on a deep level. Paraprofessionals also contribute greatly to our school spirit by actively participating in and helping to organize events and celebrations held for our school.

Testimony from Randee Caines, Manhattan paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Randee Caines, and I am a paraprofessional in Manhattan. I am most proud of my work when I know I have made a breakthrough with a student academically, socially or emotionally. To me, the RESPECT check would be an acknowledgement for all my work and experience. I humbly say that I have not only been an asset to my students but also to teachers, especially the ones that are just beginning in their teaching career.

Testimony from Rudina Dega, Bronx paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Rudina Dega, and I am a paraprofessional in the Bronx. I'm most proud of making a positive difference in students' lives each day, whether it's by helping a student understand a new concept or building their confidence, or by simply being someone they can count on. Seeing students grow and succeed, and knowing I played a part in that progress, is the most rewarding part of my work.

To me, the RESPECT check means recognizing the value and dedication of paraprofessionals who often work behind the scenes. It's about pausing to appreciate my patience, compassion and commitment to helping every student succeed. The RESPECT check is a reminder to treat us as true partners in education because the school community wouldn't thrive without our support.

Testimony from Ruthy Ramirez, Manhattan parent, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Ruthie Ramirez. My child Denim was nonverbal until age 10. Now he is graduating high school and eager to attend college due to the tender love all his paraprofessionals have given him.

Paraprofessionals deserve this RESPECT check because they provide daily, hands-on support that helps Denim access learning, stay focused and participate fully in class. They implement accommodations and strategies from his IEP, turning goals into practical progress. They build trusting relationships that boost Denim's confidence, independence and motivation. They observe and report important details about his behavior, performance and needs that inform better educational decisions. They help him develop life and social skills critical for success at college and as an adult. Their consistency and patience create a safe, positive environment where Denim can grow.

Testimony from Sabrina Vera, Bronx paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Sabrina Vera, and I am a paraprofessional in the Bronx. Recently, I moved into my parents' home in Connecticut because I couldn't afford to live on my own with my daughter. As a paraprofessional, I have impacted hundreds of students who are now adults. After 21 years of service, so many keep in contact and express how I've changed their lives. Paraprofessionals put in so much work. I'm proud of being able to co-teach and not just sit in a corner and babysit a student. I'm proud to be included and treated as an educator, not "just a paraprofessional," by children and adults. They know what we are worth, and the RESPECT check would reflect that.

Testimony from Samantha Batsikas, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Samantha Batsikas, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. I am proud to provide a safe environment for my students and to be a figure in the classroom who not only assists with academics but also provides mentorship and guidance. Every student deserves the chance to excel regardless of the limitations that are out of their control, and I directly assist in making that happen every day. I create a space where everyone can run their race.

The RESPECT check would make me more secure in my position. Paraprofessionals have a high turnover rate due to low pay. We feel that our position is seen as an intermediate level one and that we need to seek other jobs within the DOE to earn professional-level pay. The RESPECT check would mean that I could appreciate my paraprofessional title as a career and focus on my students.

**Testimony from Samantha Catalano, Staten Island paraprofessional,
before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation**

My name is Samantha Catalano, and I am a paraprofessional on Staten Island. The aspect of my work I'm most proud of is the ability to truly connect with the kids I support. Helping them learn, grow and gain confidence while navigating their disabilities, seeing their progress and knowing I've played a part in their development is incredibly rewarding.

The RESPECT check would make a big difference. As a paraprofessional, the work is full-time and incredibly demanding, yet it's often hard to make ends meet without a second job. Extra financial support would help relieve some of that pressure and allow me to focus even more on the students I work with.

Testimony from Sender JeanPaul, Brooklyn paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Sender JeanPaul, and I am a paraprofessional in Brooklyn. The RESPECT check would really help me pay off some of the loans I have, and give me a leg up financially, which I could use. Living in New York City isn't easy, and working with the special needs population is energetically and emotionally demanding. It's also one of the most invisible positions in all of the Department of Education. It'd be great to get encouragement in the form of this check.

Testimony from Shannen Goyco, Manhattan paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Shannen Goyco, and I am a paraprofessional in Manhattan. I'm most proud of the impact I have on my students — the small, everyday moments that remind me why I do this work. I'm often the person who gives a child the extra support, patience or encouragement they need to feel seen and capable. Watching a student who once struggled finally grasp a concept, smile with confidence or simply feel safe enough to try again — that's what fills me with pride. I take pride in showing up every day with empathy and dedication, even when it's hard, because I know my presence matters. My students depend on me, and being a steady, positive influence in their lives is the most rewarding part of my job.

As a paraprofessional in New York City, the RESPECT check would truly change my life. Every day, I pour my heart into supporting students — helping them learn, feel understood and thrive — yet I go home feeling defeated because I can barely afford to take care of myself. I live on the Upper East Side, where the cost of living is extremely high. I work two jobs just to keep my head above water, and it's not only exhausting — it's mentally and emotionally draining.

It's disheartening to be so passionate about education and still feel so undervalued. The RESPECT check would mean stability, relief and a sense of dignity. It would allow me to pay down debt, breathe for the first time in a long time, and focus on my dream of going to graduate school to advance in education. I love what I do but love alone shouldn't require this much sacrifice. The RESPECT check would be more than just financial help — it would be a lifeline and a long-overdue acknowledgment that our work and dedication truly matter.

Testimony from Stephanie Hoe, Staten Island paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Stephanie Hoe, and I am a paraprofessional on Staten Island. I'm most proud of the relationships I've built with my students and the trust they place in me. Many of them face significant challenges, and sometimes I'm the only person they can count on for consistency and understanding. Even when the days are hard, knowing that I make a difference, even if it's only a small one, in their emotional or academic growth, is truly what keeps me going.

The RESPECT check represents more than a payment — it represents recognition, equity and investment in the backbone of our education system. Paraprofessionals are among the lowest-paid DOE employees, yet our responsibilities continue to grow. We assist teachers, support students with disabilities, manage behaviors, and help create safe, inclusive learning environments. This check would signal a first step toward fair compensation. More importantly, it would show that our leaders recognize the crucial role we play in shaping children's lives and that they are willing to invest in the people who help make our schools function.

**Testimony from Suman Jain, Queens parent, before the City Council
Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on
Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation**

My name is Suman Jain, and the paraprofessionals in my daughter's special education classroom have played an essential role in her growth and success. Every day, they provide not only academic support but also patience, understanding and encouragement. They help her navigate challenges, celebrate her progress and create an environment where she feels safe, included and capable. Their teamwork, compassion and dedication have made a lasting difference in her life and in the lives of every student they serve. They are the unsung heroes of the classroom.

Testimony from Tammie Durosinmi, Brooklyn parent and retired paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Tammie Durosinmi. Paraprofessionals were an enormous help to me when my child was struggling to learn to eat and drink independently. Now, thanks to the health paraprofessional, my child is thriving.

The reason why our paraprofessionals need the RESPECT check is because they are the ones who are with our students on a daily basis, taking care of diapering and toileting and making sure they are taught at all levels of education. Without our paraprofessionals, our public-school students would be lost.

Testimony from Valerie Rafano, Staten Island paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Valerie Rafano, and I am a paraprofessional on Staten Island. The aspect of my work I'm most proud of is being able to collaborate with teachers and service providers to best implement my students' IEP goals. I love helping students, I love reinforcing the teachers' lessons and I love working for the Department of Education.

The RESPECT check would allow my two daughters and me to live a more fulfilling life where I will not have to work seven days a week. I have been a paraprofessional for nine years, and I have been relying on a second job to meet everyday living expenses as a single mother. In addition, I believe this check will help the paraprofessional crisis New York City is facing. I will be very grateful when this bill becomes a law.

Testimony from Yanill Andujar, Bronx substitute paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Yanill Andujar, and I am a substitute paraprofessional in the Bronx. I love seeing children grow and develop new skills; it's the most rewarding part of my work. Watching their confidence build as they master something new reminds me why I chose this path. Every milestone, no matter how small, is a powerful reminder of their potential and the impact we make when we nurture it with patience, creativity and care.

As a dedicated paraprofessional and working mother of two, the RESPECT check would be more than just financial support, it would be a recognition of the tireless effort I pour into both my classroom and my home. It would help ease the burden of rising child care costs, allow me to invest in educational resources for my students, and provide my family with a bit of breathing room. Every dollar makes a difference when you're balancing lesson plans with lunch boxes. This bonus would empower me to continue showing up with energy, compassion and creativity, both in my school community and for my children.

Testimony in Support of Int 1261

November 14, 2025

To the Committees on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation and Civil Service and Labor:

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

For students with disabilities in New York City public schools, paraprofessionals are an invaluable component of the guarantee of access to an equitable education. Paras are responsible for aiding in classroom instruction, ensuring the accessibility of related services, administering to the emotional and physical needs of students, and providing innumerable other supports. Every day, caregivers send their children to school, trusting their education, their health, and their safety to the paras who care for them.

Yet despite being entrusted with this tremendous responsibility to the students they serve, the starting salary for a paraprofessional is only \$32,098 and caps out at \$53,841, in a city where the NYC Comptroller's Office reported that the 2023 median rent for a 1-bedroom apartment was \$40,200 a year.

Though the Department of Education collects no data on why paraprofessionals leave the profession, it is not unreasonable to assume that the inability to make a living wage is a major factor, both in why people leave and why they do not enter the profession in the first place. The DOE estimates that there are about 1700-1900 paraprofessional vacancies in NYC schools (though other analyses estimate the number of vacancies might be in the 3000s). This shortage not only makes it more difficult for students with disabilities to receive the mandated services they are legally entitled to, it means that paras are being spread thinner in an already demanding job- an effect that, especially when coupled with the added stress of trying to make ends meet on a salary that cannot keep up with the cost of living in NYC, fosters burnout. This increases the likelihood of more paras leaving and the shortage worsening.

This crisis, where there are simply not enough paras to meet the needs of the students they serve, is additionally compounded by the treatment of paraprofessionals as though they were employed in a transitional career: recruitment tactics largely consist of touting opportunities for advancement, benefits for paraprofessionals include tuition assistance and paid time off for college study, and even attempts to narrow the gap of other shortages in the special education landscape (e.g. a teacher shortage) propose creating a para-to-teacher pipeline, ameliorating one problem while exacerbating another. These strategies, while well-intentioned, contribute to

the idea that being a paraprofessional is merely a steppingstone to another career, contributing to a high turnover rate and an overreliance on substitute paras (the DOE estimates that 9000 substitute professionals are working every day), making it more difficult for paras to build both institutional knowledge and, perhaps most importantly, relationships with their students. It is also incredibly disrespectful of a profession that requires significant knowledge, training, and patience.

Int 1261 addresses the core of this issue: paraprofessionals need to be paid more. Due to excess pay differentials stemming from pattern bargaining, they have essentially been locked into low wages that have gotten progressively more unlivable as the decades pass. **Int 1261** corrects this inequity by calculating and distributing annual excess differential offset payments. The language of the bill makes it clear it violates no law, and that the payments are not considered wages or salary. What it does do is address a systemic inequity faced by a demographic integral to the success of our students with some of the greatest needs.

CIDNY strongly supports the passage of Int 1261, both because it will ultimately help reduce the shortage of paraprofessionals in NYC schools, and because the people responsible for the growth and safety of our children deserve wages they can live on in the city they serve.

We thank the Council for their significant time and effort on this issue.

Sincerely,

Molly Senack (She/Her)
Education and Employment Community Organizer
Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York
Email: msenack@cidny.org Phone: (917)-415-3154



Emergency Medical Services Labor Alliance

Forging unity in EMS

My name is Timothy Sommerfelt and I'm here today as the President of the Emergency Medical Service Labor Alliance. In this role I have had the opportunity to study EMS systems nationwide and some trends have emerged. Since 1980, there have been 6 mergers of Fire and EMS agencies in cities with over 300,000 people. Those cities are:

- New York City
- Washinton DC
- San Francisco
- St Louis
- Kansas City
- Fort Worth

Most of these mergers happened over 25 years ago, and have been studied extensively by academics consultants, and grand juries. These mergers have not always lived up to expectations. The vast majority of time, energy and budgets continue to be spent on fire suppression while EMS is treated as a secondary mission despite the fact that over 75% of most of these agencies' workloads are comprised of EMS responses.

The merger of New York City EMS into the FDNY is one of the larger and more pronounced examples of this problem. Ironically, while often times the stated purpose of merging EMS into Fire is to better resource EMS, the end result is the opposite. Without proper long-term oversight and the proper commitment of resources, including ongoing job classification studies to track the changes in job duties over time that necessarily come with such a merger, and appropriate corresponding steps to adjust pay to reflect the changes in job duties as the work of EMS becomes more integrated with Fire, these mergers only work to exacerbate underpayment and deplete the resources of EMS perpetuating a secondary status for EMS as it becomes more and more burdened with providing a larger portion of the emergency responses for the agency.





Emergency Medical Services

Labor Alliance

Forging unity in EMS

Conversely, I have also had the opportunity to observe many third service EMS agencies that are separate from fire departments in cities such as Austin, Boston, Pittsburgh, New Castle County Delaware, Minneapolis and Cleveland. Although these services often receive much smaller budgets compared to other safety services in their cities, they are nevertheless industry leaders within the EMS community: pioneering innovative treatments such as:

- prehospital blood for trauma patients
- medication assisted treatments to reduce opioid deaths
- Finger thoracotomies to reduce traumatic mortality
- Medically-centered rescue services
- and community paramedics to better connect some of the most vulnerable in our society with the healthcare and social service resources

These Third-service EMS agencies are an excellent value for their community: their entire focus is on delivering top-notch out-of-hospital medicine to their residents and they consistently deliver outstanding outcomes.

Its also worth noting that these third-service EMS agencies pay their EMS providers similar wages to other safety services as seen in the attached worksheet. This allows these agencies to recruit and retain top-notch EMS clinicians, who continually refine their skills and grow more proficient due to their high number of patient contacts.

There is this myth within the EMS community that high turnover and low satisfaction are intractable problems, that EMS will forever be a “stepping stone” to bigger and better things.

This does not have to be the case. In addition to my EMSLA duties, I have spent the last 18 years as a Cleveland Ohio, EMS paramedic and union official. During my time, Cleveland EMS faced many of the same staffing challenges faced throughout the industry, and we tried many of the same solutions, such as in-house training, flashy recruitment posters, and we even considered a fire merger around 2013. Despite these efforts, CEMS was recruiting less than 10 new paramedics each year, while attrition remained high.

Then, earlier this year, we were awarded a new contract that gave us pay parity with police and fire. Since that new contract, attrition has slowed to a trickle, and we have the largest class of incoming paramedics in years starting next week.

Its also worth noting that as a medic in Cleveland, you would make more than your counterparts in New York City with a much lower cost of living.





Emergency Medical Services

Labor Alliance

Forging unity in EMS

So whether creating a separate Department to shield EMS from the problems I have discussed, or properly resourcing EMS and creating pay equity within the Fire Department, EMS staffing does not have to be an intractable problem and the solution is simple: Fair, equitable, wages paid in a medically-focused system will produce the best results for both the employees, the employer, and the citizens we are called to serve.

EMS is not a jobs program for underutilized firefighters. Its an essential public service that should be performed by dedicated clinicians, especially in New York City

City	Agency / Title	Year	Hourly Start	Salary Start	Hourly Top	Salary Top	Yrs- Top
Austin-Travis	EMS Clinical Spec	2025	\$ 31.23	\$ 73,078	\$ 49.33	\$ 115,432	26
Austin-Travis	Firefighter	2025	\$ 29.88	\$ 62,159	\$ 51.54	\$ 107,208	25
Austin-Travis	Police officer	2025	\$ 37.80	\$ 78,627	\$ 69.03	\$ 143,578	23
Cleveland	Patrol Officer	2025	\$ 31.02	\$ 64,530	\$ 41.79	\$ 87,218	5
Cleveland	Firefighter	2025	\$ 28.65	\$ 67,386	\$ 36.93	\$ 87,170	5
Cleveland	Paramedic	2025	\$ 30.20	\$ 69,098	\$ 38.49	\$ 88,410	8
Hennepin	Paramedic	2025	\$ 31.54	\$ 65,603	\$ 48.33	\$ 100,526	10
Hennepin	Min Firefighter	2025	\$ 29.80	\$ 70,070	\$ 36.11	\$ 84,942	
Hennepin	Min Police	2025	\$ 41.83	\$ 87,006	\$ 52.10	\$ 108,368	
New Castle	State Police	2025		\$ 86,919		\$ 213,172	
New Castle	County PD	2025		\$ 58,334		\$ 111,145	21
New Castle	Wilmington Fire	2025		\$ 55,289		\$ 95,218	25
New Castle	Para S/Cpl	2025	\$ 47.58	\$ 100,344	\$ 47.58	\$ 100,344	0
New Castle	Paramedic Cpl	2025	\$ 39.15	\$ 82,553	\$ 45.32	\$ 95,565	3
New Castle	Paramedic 1st Class	2025	\$ 32.21	\$ 67,917	\$ 43.16	\$ 91,015	6
New Castle	Paramedic	2025	\$ 26.50	\$ 55,875	\$ 41.10	\$ 86,681	10
Pittsburgh	Patrol Officer	2025	\$ 33.15	\$ 68,952	\$ 43.74	\$ 90,979	5
Pittsburgh	Firefighter	2025	\$ 24.99	\$ 51,979	\$ 39.78	\$ 82,742	5
Pittsburgh	Crew Chief	2025	\$ 42.31	\$ 94,605	\$ 42.31	\$ 94,605	1
Pittsburgh	Paramedic	2025	\$ 26.65	\$ 59,589	\$ 39.33	\$ 61,567	5
Pittsburgh	A-EMT	2025	\$ 25.75	\$ 57,577	\$ 26.65	\$ 57,717	2
Pittsburgh	EMT	2025	\$ 22.07	\$ 49,349	\$ 25.75	\$ 49,923	3





#STANDWITHEMS



**The Uniformed EMTs, Paramedics
and Inspectors — F.D.N.Y.**

Local 2507, District Council 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
150-39 14th Avenue, 2nd Floor
Whitestone, New York, 11357
(718) 371-0310 Fax: (718) 371-0318



November 2025

Dear Friends of FDNY EMS,

It is no secret that New York's frontline medical first responders are essential to our city's survival. FDNY EMTs and paramedics are courageous individuals who display inspiring commitment to keeping our city and its citizens safe and healthy.

In 2024, FDNY EMTs and paramedics responded to a record 1,630,446 medical emergencies, a 15.4% increase since the height of the pandemic. From bringing people back to life following overdoses, to administering critical care to victims of stabbings, gunshots, cardiac arrests, and strokes, these 'street doctors' are a symbol of what makes our city great.

Five years post-COVID, our FDNY EMTs and paramedics are suffering and need your support! Job turnover is a massive and unsustainable 70%. The poverty wage for our city's brave and dedicated EMTs is \$18.94, or about \$12.18/hour after taxes.

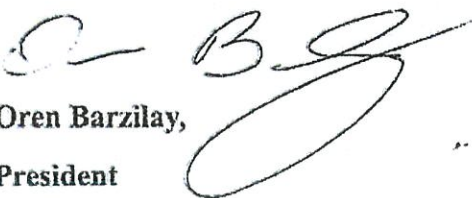
The latest Mayor's Management Report (MMR) shows emergency response times are up 1 minute 47 seconds over the last four years.

Despite commitments this administration and the FDNY made over decades past, the members of EMS are not treated with the commensurate respect and wage equity as our city's frontline first responder peers at police and fire.

EMS members simply cannot afford to live in the city we protect. EMTs often live miles outside of the city, requiring hours-long commutes, turning an 8-hour shift into 10 or 12 hours. Most must also have a second or third job, just to feed themselves and their families.

FDNY EMTs and paramedics are miracle workers, protecting lives while earning wages that are incompatible with the skilled medical professionals we are. It is past time for the city to invest in our medical first responders as they do for our great police and fire.

Can we count on you to #StandWithEMS?


Oren Barzilay,
President

Voices From NYC's Opinion/Editorial Pages

It's time for Mayor Adams to pay EMS workers what they deserve

By: City Council Speaker
Adrienne Adams & Council
Member Justin Brannan,
Finance Committee Chair
July 27, 2025

amny

"Only the mayor has that power, and he must stop skirting his responsibility to our city's first responders. Honoring EMS workers means paying them equitably for their valuable labor. It is a disgrace to call them 'heroes' and 'sheroes' while refusing to pay them enough to afford to live in the city they serve."

EL DIARIO

Desde 1913, El Campeón de los Hispanos

Los médicos del FDNY merecen un mejor salario

Por Jennifer Aguiluz
10 Sep 2025

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRANSLATION:

"Respect for FDNY EMTs must go beyond applause or false promises from the mayor of New York City. They need fair pay that reflects their training, sacrifice and the essential service they provide. New York cannot afford to underestimate those who keep us alive."

The Chief

A VOICE FOR WORKERS

"the City Council and mayoral administration's failure to address this situation has caused us to be in a serious staffing crisis."

"with recruitment levels at an all time low, no wonder the average response time for life-threatening medical emergencies is 12.35 minutes in 2025, alarmingly up from 11.87 minutes in 2024."

Why isn't the city taking care of first responders?

By: Assemblywoman
Stacey Pfeffer Amato
July 29, 2025

Amsterdam News

FDNY EMS: Is city giving us diversity without dignity?

By: SHAKERIA M. THOMAS
October 16, 2025

"There really must be something wrong here with a city government leadership that is so blind or insensitive to New Yorkers' real need for quality FDNY EMS protections. Yet the salaries of this mostly female and minority workforce are dwarfed by fellow first responders with whom they work shoulder to shoulder."

NEW YORK POST

By: The Post Editorial Board
July 20, 2025

"The union representing the city's first responders (FDNY EMS) say under the new rates, rookie FDNY EMTs — whose starting pay is \$39,386 — will earn less than illegal-immigrant deliveristas."

amny

NYC EMT pay is a disgrace. It's time for City Hall to do what's right

By: AMNY Editorial Board
July 21, 2025

"Every New Yorker or someone they love will eventually need the services of an EMT or paramedic. We need to ensure that those EMTs and paramedics can do their jobs to the best of their abilities — and that can only happen if they are given the living wages they need."

"What more does a New York City EMT or paramedic need to do to get a living wage? Apparently, saving lives isn't enough."

CRAIN'S NEW YORK BUSINESS

City's emergency medical responders deserve better treatment

September 10, 2025
Oren Barzilay

"Regardless of the statistical facts about our massive workload, this city's EMTs make a disgracefully low wage of \$18.94/hour. That means our uniformed workforce must hold down second and third jobs. Many qualify for food stamps and Section 8 housing, while others live in homeless shelters or their cars."

DAILY NEWS

Insufficient Funds

February 28, 2025

"The lower wage of FDNY EMS members sticks out like a sore thumb. New York's EMTs, consistently overlooked despite promises to address pay disparity, start at \$18.94 per hour."

"I can no longer tell the public or my people in good faith to join or stay in the FDNY if the city does not seem interested in fixing this issue."

VITAL CITY

Why Does EMS Worker Pay Remain So Lousy? Blame Politics

MAY 14, 2025
By: Richard Steier

"The salary gap has grown increasingly glaring since 9/11, as EMS medical responses have dramatically increased while structural fires have continued their steady decline."

"EMTs, who start service at \$39,386, max out at \$59,534. Firefighters max out at \$105,146."

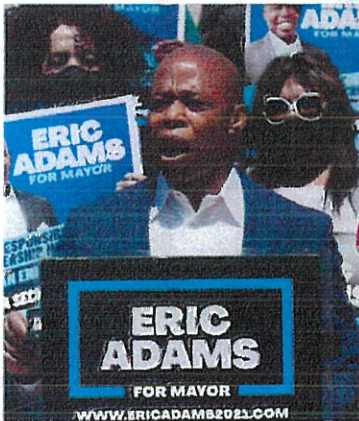
DAILY NEWS

Dangerous and lifesaving work deserves fair pay

By: Voice of the People
PUBLISHED: September 16, 2025

"Our FDNY EMS personnel work in harsh, dangerous conditions — often at shootings, stabbings, overdoses, cardiac events or communicable disease scares — to protect New Yorkers, yet City Hall shamefully refuses its medical first responders respect and fair pay."

The mayor bailed on FDNY EMT wage equity once elected:



Ben Fractenberg/THE CITY

Tweet: June 4th, 2021



I'm so proud to be endorsed by our hard-working EMS community & the men & women who've sacrificed so much fighting on the frontlines of the pandemic.

For years our EMTs, paramedics & fire inspectors have been shamefully denied pay parity—that comes to an end when I become Mayor.



@WorkBitesNews @NYCMayor commits to establishing pay parity for @FDNY EMS workers who are primarily women and people of color and make tens of thousands of dollars less than firefighters who are mostly white males. @uemso_FDNy @fdnyvulcans @1995EU @FDNYchit @NYCEMSwatch

Pay Parity

Local 2507

22 followers

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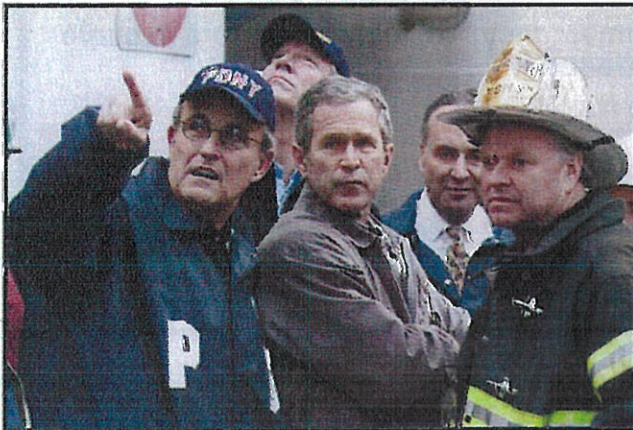
Save

<https://youtu.be/LSupTAV9hDA?si=3EnXTURwRiCwE-G2>

“Our EMTs, paramedics, and fire inspectors deserve our City’s thanks and respect, but for years they have been shamefully denied basic pay equity,” Adams said when accepting the endorsement.”

“As mayor, I will not stand for discrimination against workers, especially not the women and men who have put their lives at risk to save ours day after day.” - Mayor Adams

Former FDNY Commissioner Thomas von Essen on FDNY EMS:



Doug Mills / Associated Press

Life-saving NYC medics treated like zeroes with low pay: ex-FDNY boss says

“City emergency medical services workers continue to make measly pay – despite promises 25 years ago to provide them salaries comparable with firefighters and other uniformed officers, former Fire Commissioner Tom von Essen said in a new interview.”

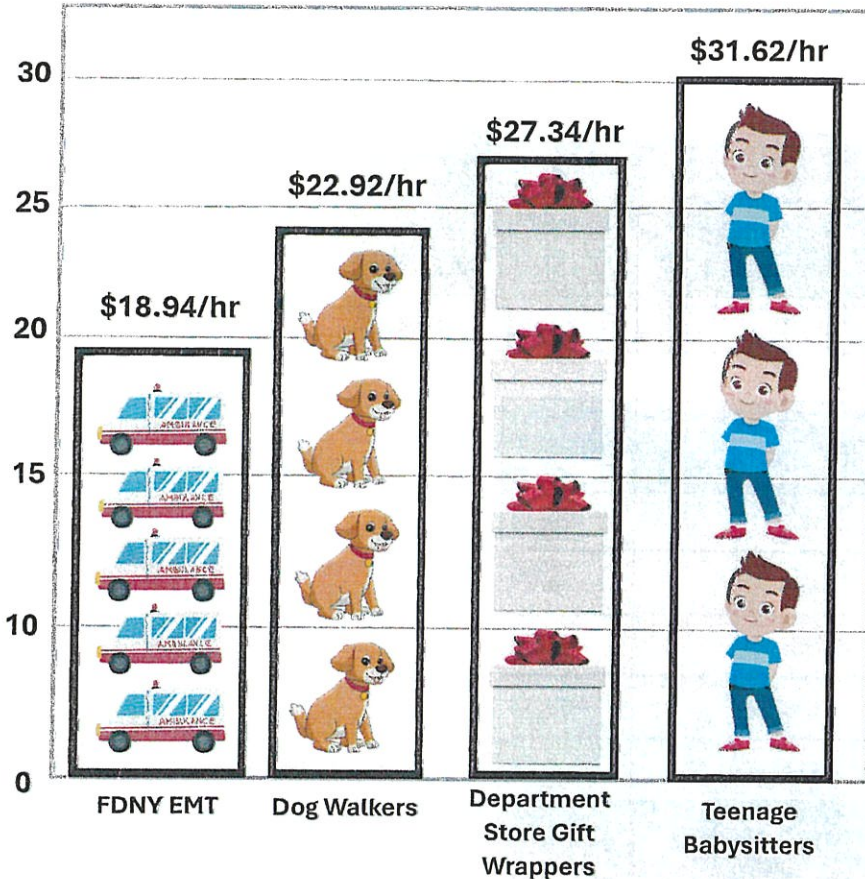
“Nobody did anything for those guys. These guys have been getting screwed around for years. It’s so wrong. It’s disgusting,” - Former FDNY Commissioner, Thomas von Essen (1996-2001)

<https://nypost.com/2023/10/15/life-saving-nyc-medics-treated-like-zeroes-with-low-pay-ex-fdny-boss-von-essen-says/>

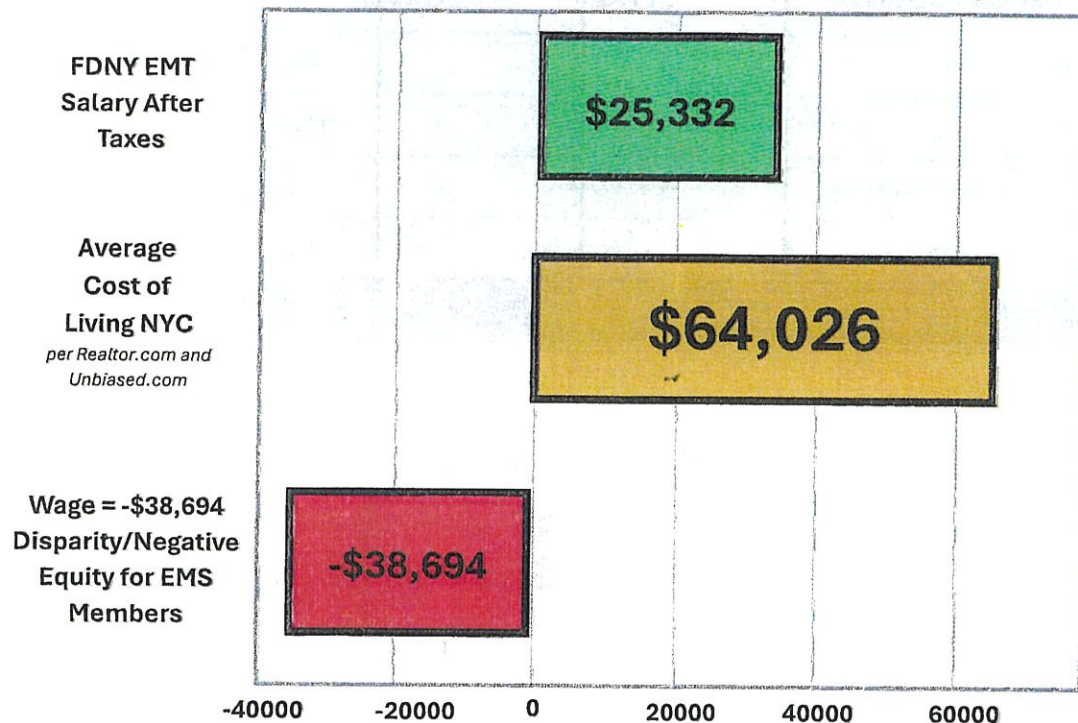
Wage Comparisons

*Numbers shown are based on estimates, averages, and online data.

Average Hourly Wages in NYC
FDNY EMTs Compared to "Low Skill" Jobs
Wages reported by Indeed.com



FDNY EMT Salary after taxes is \$25,332
Less than half the Average Cost of Living in NYC (\$64,026)



TRUE FDNY EMT Wage ≈ 12.18/hr

Real Poverty

Typical FDNY EMT biweekly paystub

Pay Period: 06/01/25 - 06/14/25

Net Pay Current				\$974.32
Pay	Prior Per Hours	Prior Per Amount	Current Per Hours	Current Per Amount
RECURRING REGULAR GROSS			80	1,510.70

→ \$487.16 per week

→ \$18.88 /hr

Tax Deductions	YTD Amount	Amount	
SOCIAL SECURITY/FICA	1,575.77	99.93	
MEDICARE-EMPLOYEE SHARE	368.53	23.37	
FEDERAL WITHHOLDING TAX	1,752.33	88.33	
STATE WITHHOLDING TAX	1,108.09	62.64	
NEW YORK CITY WITHHOLDING TAX	821.47	46.08	
Deductions	Goal Amount or Total Installments	Balance Due or Installments Left	Amount
DC 37 LIFE INSURANCE			46.34
PAID FAMILY LEAVE GOAL ORIENTED	354.53	253.45	6.25
NYCERS PENS SYS (414H)-STD			48.35
EMT 25YR 414H			100.73
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE EMPL			42.21
RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN			73.13
Total Deductions Current			637.36

= Total Tax Withholding:
\$320.35

= Total Insurance Deductions:
\$317.01

FDNY EMT Take Home Wage ≈ \$12.18/hr

= \$1,948.64 per month

= \$25,332.32 per year

FDNY EMT: Real Salary

The average cost of living in NYC is about **\$38,694** more than an EMT makes a year, after deductions.



To survive, some FDNY EMTs rely on programs such as **SNAP** (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and HUD **Section 8** housing vouchers.



Other members of EMS end up **homeless**, living out of cars, or couch surfing with relatives / friends.



Many are forced to **commute from hours outside of NYC** to be able to afford housing. Commutes often turn 8-hour shifts into 12-hour ordeals, often in tandem with 2nd and 3rd jobs.

FDNY EMS Brain Drain

- **70%** of the FDNY EMS workforce leaves the agency within the **first five years** on the job.
- It is expected that **more than 1,500 members** (37% of the workforce) will **leave within the next 12 months**. (FDNY EMS Local 2507)

In 2016, EMS responded to **1,440,268** medical emergencies, and total personnel equaled **4,414**. Now, EMS is responding to over **200,000 more emergencies**, but personnel totals **just over 4,000**. (FDNY EMS Local 2507)

The continual increase in responses with fewer workers, inadequate pay, poor working conditions, and extreme stress is causing this **brain drain**.

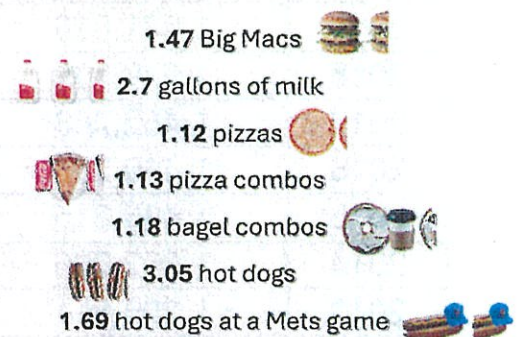
Facts

Salary Comparison

After deductions, FDNY EMTs bring home about **\$12.18** an hour

- A Big Mac in Midtown costs **\$8.29**
- Gallon of whole milk at Target in Midtown: **\$4.59**
- Small pizza at Domino's in Midtown: **\$10.88**
- 2-piece pizza meal at Uncle Paul's Pizza near Grand Central: **\$10.79**
- Bagel & medium coffee at Ess-a-Bagel in Midtown: **\$10.29**
- Hot dog at John's Famous Hot Dogs in Midtown: **\$4**
- Hot dog at a Mets game: **\$7.19** (Statista)

1 hour of an FDNY EMT's life saving work is equivalent to only...



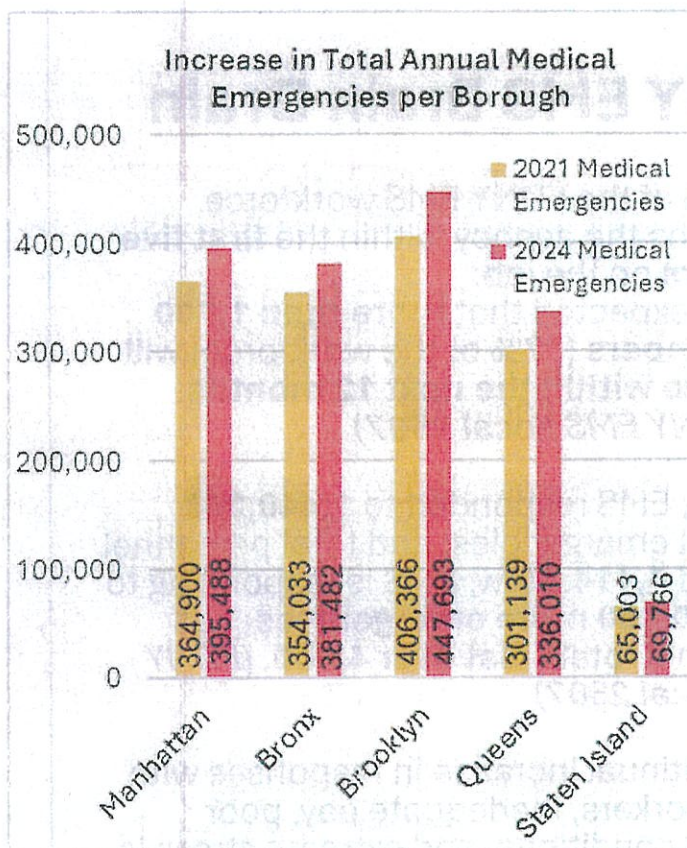
Despite protecting 64.3 million tourists in 2024, FDNY EMS members cannot afford to have any work-life balance.

Critical FDNY EMS Stats for New York City

- **2025 On Pace to Surpass 1.7 million Medical Emergencies**, an increase of 7.3% over 2024.
 - Since 2014, NY City Medical Emergencies are UP 20.5%
 - Since 2004, NY City Medical Emergencies are UP 45.8%
- **2024 = Busiest Year in FDNY EMS History** - with 1,630,446 civilian medical emergencies.
- From 2021 to 2024, medical emergencies in Queens up 11.6%, Brooklyn up 10.2 %, Manhattan up 8.4%, Bronx up 7.8%, and Staten Island up 7.3%
- Since the start of the COVID pandemic in 2020, responses by NYC medical first responders are up 15.4%
- Since 2004, FDNY EMS has responded to nearly 29 million (28,651,392) medical emergencies.
- Soaring call volumes result in over half a million more emergency medical calls in 2024 over 2004 (526,331)
- **Biggest Single Year Increase** – 2021 to 2022, 1,488,097 to 1,580,871 – a 6.25% Increase in Medical Emergencies
 - EMS Division merged into FDNY in 1996.
 - In neighboring Nassau County, EMTs and paramedics earn up to \$142,000 per year after 12 years on the job, with a starting salary of \$50,000.
 - After just one year, Nassau County medics make \$81,000, \$6,000 more than a 20-year FDNY medic.

	Total # of Medical Emergencies
2024	1,630,446
2023	1,619,863
2022	1,580,871
2021	1,488,097
2020	1,412,690
2019	1,531,870
2018	1,529,569
2017	1,462,268
2016	1,440,268
2015	1,435,315
2014	1,352,766
2013	1,309,811
2012	1,299,594
2011	1,256,547
2010	1,261,993
2009	1,236,730
2008	1,215,026
2007	1,187,602
2006	1,152,109
2005	1,129,842
2004	1,118,115
Total	28,651,392

Emergency Response Data: Time and Responses



Mayor's Management Report, September 2025

Response Times to Life Threatening Emergencies

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	5-Year	Desired Direction
Life Threatening Emergency Incidents	515,598	564,412	605,140	633,361	620,467	*	*	Up	*
Emergency Medical Incidents (Ambulances)	1,388,043	1,531,959	1,613,316	1,644,446	1,615,531	*	*	Up	*
Average Number of Medical Emergencies Per Day	3,794	4,179	4,380	4,430	4,361	*	*	Up	Down
Med. Emergencies Resulting in Patient Transport	875,276	959,114	1,009,613	1,029,292	1,001,801	*	*	Up	*
End-to-end Average Response Time to Medical Emergencies by Ambulances (minutes:seconds)	9:34	10:17	10:43	10:52	11:21	*	*	Up	Down
End-to-end Average Response Time to Med. Emergencies by Fire Companies (minutes:seconds)	8:29	9:01	9:24	9:37	9:42	*	*	Up	Down

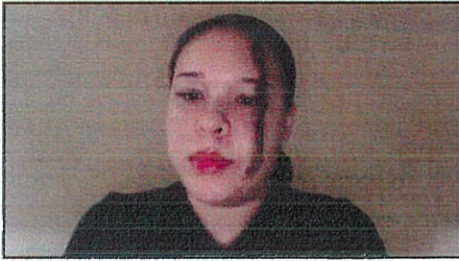
In FY2025, so far, the average response time for life-threatening medical emergencies by ambulances is **11 minutes and 21 seconds**

- **29-second increase** over FY2024
- **1-minute and 4-second increase** over FY2023
- **1-minute and 47-second increase** over FY2021 - **UNACCEPTABLE**

Health Facts and Response Times 🕒

- For **every minute** a stroke is not treated, a person **loses 1.9 million cells**; the longer the response time, the more severe the damage. (National Institute of Health)
- With sudden cardiac arrest, **irreversible brain damage begins** in as little as **4 minutes**, and **survival is unlikely** if effective CPR is not started within **8–10 minutes**. (American Heart Association)
- If a major artery is severed, a person can bleed to death in as little as **2 minutes**. (Health and Safety Institute)

FDNY EMT Member Testimonials



FDNY EMT Shari Ramirez
EMS Battalion 20, Pelham Pkwy S, Bronx

Enlist Day: June 13, 2025
Home: Bronx, NY

Why did you join EMS?

"I have always loved medicine and one day when I saw a FDNY recruitment stand, joining EMS called out to me. I love what EMS stands for and I want to continue growing in this department, so that's why I stand with EMS."

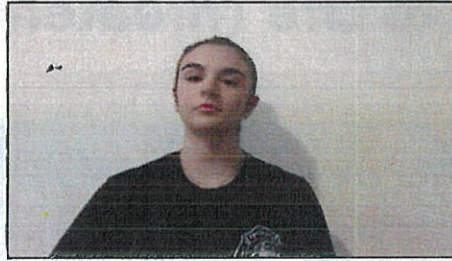
What are the difficulties with conditions as an EMT? How are the wages?

"As a new EMT, I have been responding to different emergencies. The calls vary from basic calls to near death patients to mental health cases, where people can actively harm you or your crew. It's dangerous and we put our lives on the line trying to help people."

I do like this job and put in 50-60 hours a week including overtime, but it is definitely physically and mentally taxing. We don't get a lot of sleep and are constantly on the move responding to calls. Dealing with people that curse out EMTs or generally talk bad to us is mentally draining. Some EMTs get PTSD because of the things we see on a daily basis. EMS gets treated unfairly, yet we are trying our absolute hardest.

The pay is not enough, especially since we do so much and put ourselves at risk every day. EMTs work tirelessly to get patients to the hospital in the best condition and we are the first line of contact. Being an EMT has opened my eyes to the heartbreaking realities of this city.

I thought schizophrenia was incredibly rare, but I've found out that so many people are struggling with illnesses they cannot control."



FDNY EMT Sophia Riccio
EMS Battalion 44, Rockaway Ave, Brooklyn

Enlist Day: October 18, 2024
Home: Staten Island, NY

Why did you join EMS?

"The city needs EMTs that really care about patients. There are not enough EMTs or first responders and there are so many emergency calls all over the city. I love patient care and I love the medical field."

What are the difficulties with conditions as an EMT? How are the wages?

"The daily work conditions are not easy. We are all bombarded with calls and extremely busy, so EMTs are all getting run down. Just to get by, I have had to work close to 60 hours a week and it's incredibly physically demanding. Mentally, you see a lot of things no one should see on a daily basis and it takes a big toll on all of us. Many EMTs have long commutes to their stations and we are not getting enough sleep. Anyone I talk to that is not EMS finds it disgusting how we get treated and paid."

More people are dropping out of the service and calls are getting delayed as a result because there are not enough ambulances anymore. People ask themselves, 'Why would I want to be in this job seeing these things and do so much for the city just to be paid like this?'"

We need to get paid more, it's as simple as that. We are people that need to feed our families and ourselves. We are on the same calls as fire and police doing incredibly hard work and deserve to be compensated fairly."



FDNY EMT Taysha Soto
EMS Battalion 20, Pelham Pkwy S, Bronx

Enlist day: October 7, 2024
Home: Staten Island, NY

Why did you join EMS?

"I know I joined EMS for a purpose and helping people is what makes me happy. I love making a difference in someone's day. I love the people I work with and that's why I stand with EMS."

What are the difficulties with conditions as an EMT? How are the wages?

"The daily working conditions are rough. As soon as one response ends, we are called to another."

I have two kids and I am so mentally and physically drained. I work 12 hours a day and we have to pick up overtime in order to receive a decent check. The pay is horrible, it is not livable. I am a single mother commuting from Staten Island to the Bronx, I have to pay for tolls and gas. Obviously, when you include regular bills on top of that, it's not livable."

When I look at my paycheck without overtime, it comes out to \$1,100 - \$1,200 bi-weekly. I know people that work for UberEats making more than me. We are putting our lives at risk and we feel very underappreciated. We are at the bottom of the bottom. It's not fair. We get the job done and save lives everyday. We are the first ones making patient contact before reaching the hospital. Why not invest in us? We deserve it."



FDNY EMT Jasiah Canelo
EMS Battalion 13, Washington Heights

Enlist Day: May 22, 2023
Home: Queens, NY

Why did you join EMS?

"I've always enjoyed helping people. My job before joining EMS was as a job counselor for teenagers. On the day EMS Lt. Alison Russo was murdered, I saw the camaraderie of the Department, and I knew I wanted to join. From the academy to finally becoming an EMT, I've loved everything about it. EMS is a tight-knit community, and the work is incredibly rewarding."

What are the difficulties with conditions as an EMT? How are the wages?

"Work as an EMT is not forgiving at all on your body and mental state. For walk-up buildings with no elevators, we have to carry up and down hundreds of pounds of both equipment and patients on a consistent basis during long 12-hour shifts. My colleagues and I have noticeable body pain that makes every day harder."

A lot of new EMTs join when they are only 19 or 20 years old, and seeing people in traumatic, distressed situations at that age is not easy on the mind."

Regardless of any overtime we work, the pay is not enough for New York City. EMS has a contributory pension plan for members, but I and most others cannot afford to put into that because we would not be able to survive. Next, when you add over \$400 in tolls every month to commute to work on top of gas, I struggle financially. We are responding to the same calls as police and fire, and our workload is borderline unsustainable. The top pay for EMS is tens of thousands of dollars less than NYPD and fire, which is unbelievable to me."

The things we respond to on a daily basis are difficult to witness, and they take a big physical and mental toll, especially in high-volume areas across the Bronx and Manhattan. In my 2023 graduating class of roughly 160, I know 40 that already left EMS to work in other industries."



FDNY EMT Mitchell Tarnapolsky
EMS Battalion 43, Coney Island

Enlist Day: October 26, 2020
Home: Brooklyn, NY

Why did you join EMS?

"I started out as a lifeguard with New York City, and after saving my first drowning victim, I was compelled to join EMS. Working in EMS, when you get to bring someone back to life, it is the most gratifying feeling. Helping people is fun and rewarding, but it would be more rewarding if I could afford to live in the city."

What are the difficulties with conditions as an EMT? How are the wages?

"I work 80 hours every week, of which 50 of those hours are usually overtime, just to make ends meet. I have no time for a normal night's sleep, to spend with my wife and family, because I am at work for 24 hours. The starting pay for police and fire is what EMTs receive as top pay after five years. Wherever police officers and firefighters go, EMS is always there with them, treating patients."

Living in Coney Island, my first EMS assignment was in the Bronx. With gas, tolls, and other expenses, I was paying to go to work. The wage we make is so low, I can work at McDonald's and make more money. When I was working in the hospital system in the private sector, I was getting paid double my current salary for the same work."

I am praying that EMTs and paramedics get a contract from New York City because we have been without one for nearly four years. With the current working conditions and the low pay we get for doing our best to help New York, it is hard to recommend that anyone join EMS."



Op-ed | It's time for Mayor Adams to pay EMS workers what they deserve

By City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams and City Council Member Justin Brannan
July 27, 2025

In 2021, then Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams penned a joint op-ed with one of us calling on the city to secure pay parity for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) workers. It followed an op-ed the two of us co-wrote, demanding an end to the indefensible pay disparities faced by these workers.



FILE – Paramedics respond to a medical emergency. (Photo by Lloyd Mitchell)

Despite now having the power to actually deliver, Mayor Adams has instead turned his back on these frontline workers by failing to advance progress that would pay EMS workers what they deserve.

EMS workers—many of whom are women and people of color—are severely undervalued and underpaid for their lifesaving work. These street doctors deserve better from our city and it's far past time to provide a fair contract that pays them fair wages.

Low starting salaries make it difficult for the City to recruit and retain EMS personnel, contributing to consistently high attrition rates. As a result, nearly 75% of this workforce has less than five years on the job.

And current members of the workforce struggle to make ends meet due to the low wages, forcing too many to work a second job. One of us knows the experiences of these workers firsthand because our daughter is one of them.

It's entirely unreasonable for a city worker who is a first responder to emergencies across our neighborhoods to be so severely underpaid. Burnout and a shortage of emergency workers lead to increased response times and more negative outcomes. Our city of 8.5 million people cannot afford a scarcity of lifesaving professionals, as 911 calls are increasing. The consequences can be fatal.

To stabilize the EMS workforce and maintain a reliable emergency response citywide, Mayor Adams must address these outstanding pay disparities by negotiating a fair contract for EMS workers that finally reflects their worth.



Editorial | NYC EMT pay is a disgrace. It's time for City Hall to do what's right

By: AMNY Editorial Board
July 21, 2025



Paramedics rush an injured woman from an apartment fire at 2215 Cropsy Avenue. Photo by Lloyd Mitchell

What more does a New York City EMT or paramedic need to do to get a living wage? Apparently, saving lives isn't enough.

For three years now, FDNY EMS Local 2507, the union representing these lifesavers, has been battling City Hall for a new labor contract. Starting pay for EMTs and paramedics—whose primary responsibility is to render immediate medical assistance to New Yorkers in need and rush them to a local hospital—is under \$40,000 and rises only to a shade under \$60,000 after five years of service.

The disparity between EMTs and paramedics, and their first responder brethren, is bad enough. Last week, the City Council added insult to injury with a bill increasing the hourly wage for app-based delivery workers to \$21.44 per hour—which is a 13% higher rate than the \$18.94 per hour wage a NYC EMT/paramedic earns.

Because of this massive wage disparity, the NYC EMS service is undergoing a tremendous brain drain, as many of these lifesavers are forced to quit and find employment with better wages. Indeed, Local 2507 says EMTs quit their posts within five years. It's equally difficult to recruit new workers to a job that requires high skills for little financial reward. Meanwhile, the number of 911 calls only grows year after year in New York City.

Every New Yorker or someone they love will eventually need the services of an EMT or paramedic. We need to ensure that those EMTs and paramedics can do their jobs to the best of their abilities—and that can only happen if they are given the living wages they need.

<https://www.amny.com/editorial/nyc-emi-pay/>

Only the mayor has that power, and he must stop skirting his responsibility to our city's first responders.

Honoring EMS workers means paying them equitably for their valuable labor. It is a disgrace to call them 'heroes' and 'sheroes' while refusing to pay them enough to afford to live in the city they serve.

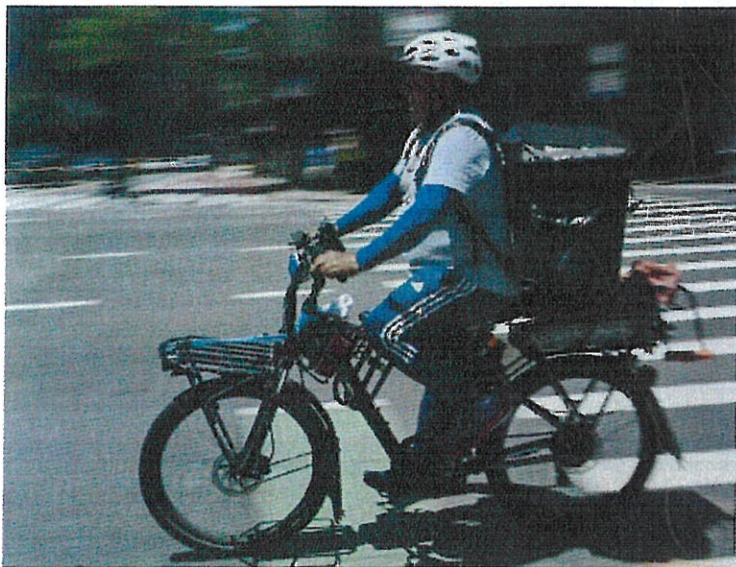
<https://www.amny.com/oped/op-ed-mayor-adams-ems-pay-deserve/>

NEW YORK POST

Opinion

City Council lefties tackle 'affordability' by driving up grocery prices. Brilliant

By Post Editorial Board | July 20, 2025



On Monday, New York City Council passed on a series of bills to improve working conditions for grocery delivery workers. Photo by ANGELA WEISS/AFP via Getty Images

"Affordability" is New Yorkers' No. 1 issue, per Gov. Kathy Hochul and Democratic mayoral nominee Zohran Mamdani. So what did the City Council just do?

It passed a measure (by a veto-proof majority) virtually guaranteeing grocery prices will shoot up — specifically, by requiring app-based delivery companies to shell out a minimum of about \$21 an hour to delivery workers.

The companies will just pass on their added costs to the public, driving business down in the process.

The union representing the city's first responders say under the new rates, rookie FDNY EMTs — whose starting pay is \$39,386 — will earn less than illegal-immigrant deliveristas.

And who knows how many of these delivery workers will soon be out of jobs, thanks to this bill: When the council, in December 2023, bumped up the minimum wage to \$18 for app-based restaurant delivery workers, menu prices jumped 12% and app fees spiked 58%.

<https://nypost.com/2025/07/20/opinion/city-council-lefties-tackle-affordability-by-driving-up-grocery-prices-brilliant/>

VITAL CITY

Why Does EMS Worker Pay Remain So Lousy? Blame Politics

RICHARD STEIER

MAY 14, 2025

The tangled history of why NYC EMTs' pay still falls far short of firefighter salaries



In April 2021, Eric Adams accepted the mayoral endorsement of the city's largest municipal union, District Council 37, and made a pledge that if elected, by his first day on the job he would give the union's Emergency Medical Technicians — who provide medical care to stabilize patients and then transport them to New York City hospitals — salary parity with firefighters.

Four years later, not only has he failed to deliver, but the pay gap between the two Fire Department forces has widened. EMTs, who start service at \$39,386, reach a top pay after five years of \$59,534. Firefighters start at \$54,122, and while they spend five-and-a-half years on the job before climbing the top step on the pay ladder, max out at \$105,146. (The pay scale is higher for the higher level of EMTs who receive nine months of paramedic training and handle advanced life support cases, where those at the entry level provide basic life support. Firefighters undergo 18 weeks of training at the Fire Academy while new EMTs get from 13 to 18 weeks of instruction. There are 4,500 EMTs and officers, compared to 11,000-plus firefighters and officers.)

The salary gap has grown increasingly glaring since 9/11, as EMS medical responses have dramatically increased while structural fires have continued their steady decline over the past half-century, from 56,127 in 1975 to about 24,000 in the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2024. During that fiscal year, the FDNY reported 1,862,151 EMS runs — triple the 619,378 fire-suppression responses.

The disparity has grown partly because of the pattern bargaining used by City Hall to control labor costs. It also doesn't help that, in contrast to firefighters, EMTs are working under a contract that expired in 2022 because their unions were so displeased by the city's pay offer in this round of bargaining.

EMTs, who start service at \$39,386, max out at \$59,534. Firefighters max out at \$105,146.

Dangerous and lifesaving work deserves fair pay

By: Voice of the People

PUBLISHED: September 16, 2025

Whitestone: Our FDNY EMS personnel work in harsh, dangerous conditions — often at shootings, stabbings, overdoses, cardiac events or communicable disease scares — to protect New Yorkers, yet City Hall shamefully refuses its medical first responders respect and fair pay.

Your story ("Eric's fail on EMT pay," Sept. 7) spotlights Adams administration leaders openly denigrating our work and lifesaving impact on Gotham. Our 4,000-plus EMTs and paramedics are not just ambulance drivers. We are specially trained medical professionals providing on-the-spot medical triage as New York City's street doctors.

All we've asked and the mayor actually committed to was a wage commensurate with our peer first responders at the NYPD, FDNY firefighters or Nassau County EMS. We are tired of the mayor lying to the press, the public and us, saying the administration looks forward to settling on a fair contract, as they have not yet negotiated in good faith.

The result is frightening for public safety — a 70% attrition rate — since the mayor and his cronies think that all we're worth is \$18 an hour. Ask the 1.63 million patients we provided care for in 2024 if they think that is reasonable.

The members of the EMS think New Yorkers' lives and our lifesaving medical work is worth so much more. Oren Barzilay, president, FDNY EMS Local 2507

<https://www.nydailynews.com/2025/09/16/readers-sound-off-on-ems-pay-parity-a-presidential-honor-and-senior-tax-breaks/>

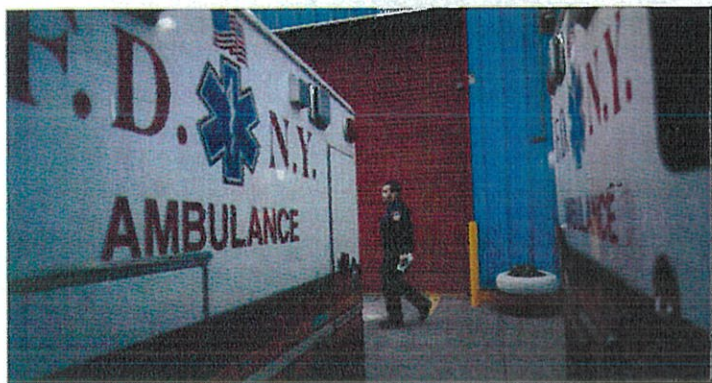
EL DIARIO

Desde 1913, El Campeón de los Hispanos

Los médicos del FDNY merecen un mejor salario

Los paramédicos de la ciudad de Nueva York respondieron a más de 1,630,446 emergencias médicas en 2024

Por Jennifer Aguiluz
10 Sep 2025



El salario inicial de un EMT del FDNY es menos de \$40,000 dólares.

Crédito: John Minchillo | AP

There have been occasions when unique circumstances have led to contracts that provide raises exceeding the established bargaining patterns, mostly for city teachers, including a couple early in Bloomberg's 12-year tenure.

Such circumstances exist for the EMTs, for whom one union official put the turnover rate at 50% during their first five years on the job. As Daily News columnist (and Vital City contributing writer) Harry Siegel wrote in March, EMS constantly loses experienced employees to the firefighter ranks because those employees get preference in hiring from civil-service lists, and even the most dedicated medical workers find it hard to ignore that pay difference. EMS union presidents for decades have railed against the comparatively low pay for their members, and the rank and file has sometimes voted for new leaders because the incumbents were unable to significantly bridge the gap.

There are two primary reasons this huge discrepancy persists, illogical as it may seem when examining the duties of the two services. One is that while there are advantages to being part of DC 37, which represents city workers in titles ranging from accountant to zookeeper, EMTs and their officers total just less than 5% of that contingent. Any raises above the norm for them would not only come at the expense of the rest of the union's members, but would cut into the pie for cops, firefighters, teachers and the rest of the city workforce.

The other reason is that the distorted pay picture vis-à-vis EMTs has its roots in bargaining relationships established 60 years ago, when meaningful negotiating rights were implemented under a city law and solidified as part of the state Taylor Law. At the time, EMS was part of the city hospital system and standards for EMTs weren't nearly as rigorous as for cops and firefighters. As a result, no thought was given to linking their salaries to those groups, as had been done for correction officers and sanitation workers.

The salary gap has grown increasingly glaring since 9/11, as EMS medical responses have dramatically increased while structural fires have continued their steady decline.

One irony in the early months of the pandemic stemmed from the concern that firefighters who contracted the coronavirus could infect entire companies who shared quarters in their firehouses.

This led to the force long known as "New York's Bravest" having its medical runs sharply curtailed, meaning EMTs treating those with the virus were the employees facing by far the greater risk of catching the virus. Union officials at the time said some of their members were sleeping on ambulance-station couches or in their cars to avoid infecting their families.

Even after the pandemic subsided, EMS runs continued to rise. They have increased by half a million annually this century, and rose by 15% since the pandemic, according to one union official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

<https://www.vitalcitynyc.org/articles/why-does-ems-worker-pay-remain-so-lousy>

Cuando los neoyorquinos marcan el 911 en sus momentos más desesperados, un Técnico de Emergencias Médicas del FDNY (EMT) llega primero. Estos profesionales son la primera línea de defensa de la ciudad, respondiendo a infartos, tiroteos, sobredosis y accidentes traumáticos. Sin embargo, a pesar de su papel vital, siguen estando entre los respondedores peor pagados en la ciudad de Nueva York.

El salario inicial de un EMT del FDNY es menos de \$40,000 dólares y es insuficiente para sobrevivir en una de las ciudades más caras del mundo. Muchos se ven obligados a tener empleos adicionales. En comparación, los bomberos y policías ganan mucho más, aunque los EMTs atienden a 86 por ciento del total de emergencias del FDNY.

Los paramédicos de la ciudad de Nueva York respondieron a más de 1,630,446 emergencias médicas en 2024, un aumento de 15.4% con respecto al número de emergencias médicas durante el pico del brote de COVID en 2020.

Esta disparidad es injusta y también peligrosa. La falta de un salario digno provoca alta renovación de personal, lo que significa menos EMT experimentados en las calles. Los neoyorquinos merecen un sistema donde quienes los cuidan en emergencias no tengan que luchar para sobrevivir.

El 70% del personal de emergencias renunciará en los próximos cinco años. Los líderes de la ciudad hacen promesas que no tienen ninguna intención de cumplirle jamás a nuestra fuerza laboral, mayoritariamente femenina y perteneciente a minorías.

El respeto hacia los EMT del FDNY debe ir más allá de aplausos o promesas falsas del alcalde de la ciudad de Nueva York. Necesitan un salario justo que refleje su preparación, sacrificio y el servicio esencial que prestan. Nueva York no puede darse el lujo de subestimar a quienes nos mantienen con vida.

Ahora es el momento de hacer que el FDNY EMS sea más central para la planificación estratégica y el presupuesto de uno de los mejores departamentos de bomberos del mundo. Las mujeres y hombres dedicados de EMS merecen algo mejor.

Jennifer Aguiluz es una veterana de FDNY EMS y miembro de la mesa directiva del sindicato 2507 de Servicios Médicos de Emergencia (EMS) del Departamento de Bomberos de Nueva York (FDNY).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRANSLATION:

The Doctors of FDNY Deserve a Better Salary

By Jennifer Aguiluz
Sep 10 2025, 06:00 AM EDT

New York paramedics responded to more than 1,630,446 medical emergencies in 2024

When New Yorkers dial 911 in their most desperate moments, an FDNY Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) is the first to arrive. These professionals are the city's first line of defense, responding to heart attacks, shootings, overdoses, and traumatic accidents. Yet, despite their vital role, they remain among the lowest-paid first responders in New York City.

The starting salary for an FDNY EMT is less than \$40,000 and is not enough to survive in one of the most expensive cities in the world. Many are forced to take on additional jobs. In comparison, firefighters and police officers earn much more, even though EMTs handle 86 percent of all FDNY emergencies.

DAILY NEWS

Insufficient funds

By: Voice of the People

PUBLISHED: February 28, 2025

Whitstone: "Dashing through the cold with scant pay" (op-ed, Feb. 24) highlighted the struggle of food delivery drivers even after a law was passed to raise their wages.

They work hard and deserve proper compensation, but the lower wage of FDNY EMS members sticks out like a sore thumb. New York's EMTs, consistently overlooked despite promises to address pay disparity, start at \$18.94 per hour, just above the \$16 per hour delivery workers get while idling and far below the \$30 per hour they were supposed to get while on delivery.

EMS workers are dedicated to their difficult and dangerous jobs, which involve regular contact with communicable diseases, coping with significant stress, and even attacks and muggings while on duty.

I can no longer tell the public or my people in good faith to join or stay in the FDNY if the city does not seem interested in fixing this issue. Oren Barzilay, president, FDNY EMS Local 2507

CRAIN'S NEW YORK BUSINESS

Op-ed: City's emergency medical responders deserve better treatment

September 10, 2025 11:03 AM

Oren Barzilay



FDNY's world-class emergency medical responders are the front lines and face of the busiest medical first response organization in the Western Hemisphere. Despite their life-saving work, New York City's emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics are treated as second-class citizens by Mayor Eric Adams.

New York City paramedics responded to more than 1,630,446 medical emergencies in 2024, a 15.4% increase compared to the number of medical emergencies during the peak of the COVID outbreak in 2020.

This disparity is both unfair and dangerously unsustainable. The lack of a livable wage leads to high turnover, which means fewer experienced EMTs on the streets. New Yorkers deserve a system where those who care for them in emergencies do not have to struggle to survive.

Seventy percent of emergency personnel are expected to resign in the next five years. City leaders make promises they have no intention of keeping to our workforce, which is majority female and made up largely of minorities.

Respect for FDNY EMTs must go beyond applause or false promises from the mayor of New York City. They need fair pay that reflects their training, sacrifice and the essential service they provide. New York cannot afford to underestimate those who keep us alive.

Now is the time to make FDNY EMS a central part of the strategic planning and budgeting of one of the best fire departments in the world. The dedicated women and men of EMS deserve better.

<https://eldiaryony.com/2025/09/10/los-medicos-del-fdny-merecen-un-mejor-salario/>

The Chief

A VOICE FOR WORKERS

Why isn't the city taking care of first responders?

Posted Tuesday, July 29, 2025

BY STACEY PHEFFER AMATO

New York Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato represents Assembly District 23



FDNY EMS personnel stood by for orders during a car fire on the upper floor of a parking garage in Midtown Manhattan in December 2021.

JOHN LAMPARSKI/NURPHOTO VIA AP

I want to say this very loudly: EMS workers save lives. They work in some of the most difficult and stressful conditions and when we have an emergency they come to help us. We call them "street doctors" for a reason.

Yet in an incredibly disappointing move, they aren't paid the hero salary they deserve. In fact, they're not even paid a living wage. Instead, it has been almost four years since they've had a contract and years without a salary increase. One might think this would be a top priority for Mayor Adams or the New York City Council as this is a service that means life or death.

Year after year, Gotham's emergency medical pros are responding to a surge in total civilian medical emergencies. The year 2024 shattered recent records as the busiest year in terms of FDNY EMS responses, with 2025 on track to be even busier.

FDNY EMTs and paramedics responded to 1,630,446 medical emergencies in 2024, a 15.4% jump from the number of medical emergencies, even at the peak of the COVID outbreak in 2020. This also accounts for a staggering 86 percent of the total 1.9 million FDNY emergencies in 2024. That has a massive impact on the Big Apple and the countless millions who either live, work or visit our city each day.

Through the staggering workload, a devastating 70 percent job turnover rate within the first five years, and the mayor breaking the commitment he made while Brooklyn Borough President that he would immediately correct the wage discrimination issue, members of FDNY EMS are getting the same or less than the typical teenage babysitter.

Regardless of the statistical facts about our massive workload, this city's EMTs make a disgracefully low wage of \$18.94/hour. That means our uniformed workforce must hold down second and third jobs. Many qualify for food stamps and Section 8 housing, while others live in homeless shelters or their cars.

Our union, which advocates for 4,300 of the FDNY's EMTs, paramedics and fire inspectors, has been waiting in vain for three years at the negotiating table seeking a fair and respectable contract.

This fight for equity has been further amplified after Mayor Adams vetoed City Council's well-intentioned bills to mandate a minimum wage increase for grocery delivery workers that would jump their hourly wage to \$21.44 per hour, a massive 13 percent higher than FDNY EMS workers' starting wage.

Delivery workers certainly deserve better conditions. However, this is another reminder of the mayor's continued failure to provide New York's "Street Doctors" with a living wage commensurate with the city's other frontline first responders.

<https://www.crainsnewyork.com/op-ed/op-ed-nycs-emergency-medical-responders-deserve-better-treatment>



OP-ED: FDNY EMS: Is city giving us diversity without dignity?

By: SHAKERIA M. THOMAS

October 16, 2025



Credit: Pexels/David Vincent Villavicencio

About \$18.94 per hour is about all our city leaders are willing to pay Fire Department of New York (FDNY) Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) to serve as our "Street Doctors," faithfully protecting city residents no matter how harrowing the circumstances. For someone with such a high level of medical training and experience to be paid that low seems kind of absurd.

the City Council and mayoral administration's failure to address this situation has caused us to be in a serious staffing crisis. With some of the lowest numbers of first responders in our city's history, along with recruitment levels at an all time low, no wonder the average response time for life-threatening medical emergencies is 12.35 minutes in 2025, alarmingly up from 11.87 minutes in 2024.

I call out the City Council and this mayor for this problem. Their actions, or lack of, have made it so you can be an Uber or food delivery worker and earn \$21 an hour, yet our EMS workers earn \$18 an hour. At the very least, can't the City Council take care of both? Is this not a priority? I think it is!

As a state elected official, I wasn't going to stand by and do nothing for our heroic first responders. This year, with the partnership of Local 2507 and Local 3621, the unions that represent the amazing men and women who serve as NYC EMS workers, I introduced and passed several bills to give them protections, parity, and respect. This includes A.7356, which sets a minimum staffing requirement so our first responders aren't alone when responding to a call. And through A.5771, we amended their pension plan so NYC EMS workers can retire after 25 years of heroic service of saving lives — just like some of their other colleagues in similar fields.

I want to clarify that the problems we are facing as a city are not the fault of any of the first responders who come to our aid. We need them, which is why it's time for the city to pay them what they deserve. I call on the city government to do right by our emergency medical service workers. Unless things change, and I'm not being dramatic, it might be easier for us to get a ride to the hospital from an Uber or Grubhub driver than a trained medical professional.

<https://www.thechiefleader.com/stories/why-isn-t-the-city-taking-care-of-first-responders,54828>

Last year, New York City's brave EMTs and paramedics responded to a record 1,630,446 medical emergencies across the five boroughs — yes: more than a million and a half incidents. That is a 15.4% increase since the peak of the pandemic. It also represents 86% of the nearly 1.9 million total emergencies responded to by the entire FDNY.

There really must be something wrong here with a city government leadership that is so blind or insensitive to New Yorkers' real need for quality FDNY EMS protections. Yet the salaries of this mostly female and minority workforce are dwarfed by fellow first responders with whom they work shoulder to shoulder.

That continuous outflow of skilled medical staff would hurt any hospital or medical practice and certainly harms the ability of the EMS to protect the citizens of each borough. The impact of disinvestment in the FDNY EMS is illustrated in the latest Mayor's Management Report, which shows response times to life-threatening medical emergencies were 11 minutes and 21 seconds in fiscal year 2025, up 1 minute 47 seconds over the last four years.

Think about it: If it's your loved one suffering a heart attack or stroke, those 11 minutes until an ambulance arrives — not at your door but instead outside the building where the emergency is taking place — take forever. When life is on the line, every second counts.

The last Brooklyn borough president said that if elected mayor, he would make it a priority to create wage equity for the EMS with police and fire. Since taking office and enjoying its power and prestige, Mayor Eric Adams has offered us only verbal compliments. Message to City Hall: Your workforce can't buy groceries or pay rent with hollow words.

City leaders should be ashamed.

<https://amsterdamnews.com/news/2025/10/16/op-ed-fdny-ems-is-city-giving-us-diversity-without-dignity/>



#STANDWITHEMS



THE HENNEPIN COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF PARAMEDICS AND EMTs
1325 WINTER ST, SUITE 102. MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55413

11/13/2025

RE: Int. 521 – Establishment of the Department of Emergency Medical Services

Chairperson Restler and Committee Members,

On Behalf of the Hennepin County Association of Paramedics and EMTs (HCAPE), the labor union representing the frontline 911 paramedics, EMTs, and dispatchers of Hennepin County, Minnesota. We write to express our support of Int. 521-2024, establishing a dedicated New York City Department of Emergency Medical Services.

As a union of career EMS professionals, we know firsthand how critical it is for EMS system to have independent leadership, sustainable funding, and a voice for the workforce. This legislation represents a historic opportunity to bring structural equity and professional recognition to one of the most essential and most undervalued branches of public safety.

New York City's EMS professionals respond to medical emergencies in every neighborhood, around the clock, often under immense pressure and with limited resources. Yet the system they sustain remains administratively subordinate and structurally underfunded compared to its police and fire counterparts. By creating a stand-alone Department of EMS, the City Council would empower EMS leadership to make decisions rooted in the realities of prehospital medicine – improving deployment, staffing, benefits/pay, and patient outcomes while ensuring transparency and accountability.

Nowhere in the reform is more urgent than in the area of pay disparity. In cities across the United States, EMS professionals routinely earn 30 to 40 percent less than police officers and firefighters, despite performing critical, life-saving public safety work. New York City is no exception. Many of its paramedics and EMTs work two or three jobs to make ends meet, while facing some of the nation's highest call volumes and cost of living. Inequity is not simply a labor issue; it is a public-safety issue. Chronic pay disparity fuels turnover, burnout, and recruitment challenges that directly affect response times and patient care. When highly trained providers leave for better paying opportunities, the city loses institutional knowledge and experience that cannot be replaced.

Creating a dedicated Department of EMS is an essential step towards achieving pay parity and professional dignity for those who deliver emergency care in the City of New York. A



THE HENNEPIN COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF PARAMEDICS AND EMTs
1325 WINTER ST, SUITE 102. MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55413

department empowered to negotiate, budget, and advocate on behalf of its workforce can finally confront the root causes of inequity instead of managing its symptoms.

HCAPE strongly urges the New York City Council to pass Int. 521-2024 and to pair its adoption with a clear roadmap towards pay equity and professional recognition for EMS providers. This legislation can set a national precedent, affirming the emergency medical services are not an auxiliary to public safety, but a pillar of it.

Respectfully,

Shane Hallow
President
Hennepin County Association of Paramedics and EMTs

Good morning, members of council.

My name is **Brian Bradford**, and I'm a **Paramedic Senior Corporal from New Castle County, Delaware**. I am representative of the **Advanced Life Support providers** who serve our citizens under a *third-service EMS model*.

I've worked in emergency medical services for **more than 20 years**, including time with both private ambulance services and third-service public agencies. I can tell you with confidence:

a third-service model provides the strongest foundation for patient-centered, accountable, and clinically excellent emergency medical care.

I'm here today because your city is considering an important decision — whether to allow EMS to stand on its own as an independent service. I want to share, from my professional experience, *why that's a beneficial change for your community*.

A Dedicated Medical Mission

When EMS operates independently, the mission is clear and undivided: *to provide the highest quality medical care to people when they need it most*.

In combined fire-EMS systems, leadership and resources are often split between two very different objectives — fire suppression and patient care. That division creates competing priorities and blurs focus. In a third-service EMS organization, every training hour, every piece of equipment, every staffing plan, and every dollar in the budget is aimed at improving medical outcomes for patients.

When the mission is singular, **our goals are measurable and meaningful**.

We define our success by *clinical outcomes*: cardiac arrest survival, effective stroke and STEMI recognition and treatment, pain management, and patient satisfaction.

This clarity of purpose leads to smarter deployment, improved accountability, and most importantly, **better outcomes for the people we serve**.

Cultural Alignment and Innovation

Firefighting and emergency medicine are both vital public services — but they are fundamentally *different professions*.

Fire suppression is tactical and incident-focused; EMS is diagnostic, medical, and patient-centered. When the two are forced under one roof, the larger culture often dominates — and the medical mission can lose its voice.

In an independent system, EMS can fully embrace its healthcare identity. It allows for **faster adoption of new medical technologies** and innovations, like blood administration, community paramedicine, advanced cardiac care protocols, and point of care ultrasound.

Our goals are clear — *improving patient health and safety* — we implement change based on medical evidence, not organizational convenience. That agility keeps your system modern, responsive, and focused on outcomes that truly matter.

The Bottom Line: Better Care for Your Community

When you combine all these factors — focused mission, transparent funding, professional workforce, and a culture of innovation — you get one thing: **better care for patients.**

An independent, third-service EMS agency ensures that every policy, every investment, and every operational decision is guided by a single question: “*What’s best for the patient?*”

That clarity leads to faster, more accurate care, higher survival rates, and a stronger connection between your EMS system and your healthcare community.

When a citizen dials 911 because a loved one can’t breathe, or because their child is unresponsive, they deserve responders whose *sole mission* is emergency medicine — not a system divided between multiple priorities.

Your decision today is about more than structure — it’s about setting your EMS system up for long-term success and sustainability.

It’s about ensuring that every person in this city receives the best possible care when they need it most.

— thank you for considering a model that puts **patients first.**

Testimony from Trevaughn Taylor, Queens paraprofessional, before the City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor and the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

My name is Trevaughn Taylor, and I am a paraprofessional in Queens. Today I stand before you not as someone extraordinary, but as someone who knows what it feels like to give everything and still be unseen and as someone who knows this injustice cannot persist.

I stand here as a paraprofessional in the New York City Public Schools, proudly serving our District 75 — one of thousands who show up day after day, quietly holding the heartbeat and being the backbone of every classroom. I've been the one who comes in early, stays late, and still finds the strength to show up again tomorrow, the next day and the day after that— not because it's easy, but because I care too much for our students, especially those in our district, not to. As I stand here before you, with my union family, we represent thousands of voices and thousands of hearts who know this same story all too well and who are right behind us.

I've been the one guiding a child through a meltdown, catching them before they fall, and teaching them to read when the world said they couldn't. I've been a mentor, a counselor, a peacemaker — and sometimes, the only safe space that child has all day. But let me be honest. I've also been the one counting pennies at the gas pump, checking my bank account before buying groceries and necessities, and lying awake at night whispering, "Lord, how am I going to make it to the next check?" There were times I was one paycheck away from eviction, times I worked two or even three jobs just to keep my head above water, and times I walked into school with an empty stomach but a full heart.

And yes, I've had nights where my car became my shelter and I still got up before sunrise to show up for my kids at school. I've smiled through hunger, encouraged others through my own heartbreak and pain and prayed that my strength wouldn't run out before that last bell rang. That's what it means to be a paraprofessional. We don't just work — we pour. We pour our time, our patience, our energy, our souls, and our hearts into a system that too often gives us so little in return.

So, when we talk about this \$10,000 RESPECT check, understand that this isn't about luxury. It's a lifeline. This is about lifting the weight that's been pressing down on the very people who hold our classrooms — and our children — together. It's about the

paraprofessional who skips lunch to cover a class; the paraprofessional who comforts a crying student while silently fighting back tears of their own; and the paraprofessional who still shows up, even when their body aches and their spirit is tired. Because when you invest in us, you invest in every student we serve. When you honor us, you honor the foundation of education itself. And when you pay us fairly, you give us the strength to keep doing what we do best — changing lives. We're not asking for favors. We're asking for fairness. We're not asking for applause. We're asking for respect.

Today, let this moment be the start of something different. The moment that the unheard are heard. That the ones who pour into others, from a place of emptiness — finally get poured into. I am not just one paraprofessional. I am the voice of many. And today, I stand with all of them with pride, with power, with purpose, and with hope. It only takes one person to start a movement; one person to raise their voice; one person to say YES; and one person to say enough is enough. If that one person has to be me, then let it be me. Because I am one, but I stand for many, and our time is now.

Paraprofessional, PS 239Q – Ridgewood, Queens

In Support of INT 1261 – Respect and Fair Pay for Paraprofessionals

To our Council Members, and members of the Committee.

My name is Aida Ortiz. I am a 74-year-old Puerto Rican woman, and I have proudly served as a New York City paraprofessional for 18 years, currently at PS 239Q in Ridgewood, Queens.

I am submitting testimony today in strong support of INT 1261, a bill that speaks to fairness, dignity, and long overdue respect for the paraprofessionals who support this city's children every day.

For nearly two decades, I have devoted myself to helping students—especially those with special needs—feel safe, understood, and capable. I have spent countless hours providing emotional support, academic guidance, and patient, compassionate care. Paraprofessionals are often the steady, familiar presence that students depend on, and our work directly impacts their success.

Despite this essential role, our compensation has never reflected the importance or intensity of our responsibilities. After 18 years of dedicated service, I should be preparing for retirement. Instead, at 74 years old, I am still working because I cannot afford to retire. Like many paraprofessionals, I fear that stepping away from my job would mean not being able to make ends meet. No one who has given so many years to New York City's children should have to face that fear.

INT 1261 represents a necessary step toward ensuring that paraprofessionals receive the respect, fair pay, and financial stability we have earned. This bill is not only about wages—it is about recognizing the value of our work and ensuring that dedicated staff like me are not forced to choose between serving students and supporting ourselves.

I respectfully urge the Council to pass INT 1261 and bring long-overdue equity to a workforce that plays an essential role in our schools every single day.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to New York City's education community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aida Ortiz".

Aida Ortiz

Testimony in Support of the Request for \$10,000 Assistance

Hello, My name is Anthony Ismael Parrales Lolín .I am requesting this support because I am currently struggling just to keep up with the basic cost of living. Despite doing everything I can, my income is not enough to cover essential expenses such as housing, food, and transportation. This constant financial strain has taken a serious toll on my well-being, and receiving this assistance would provide the stability I desperately need to simply stay afloat.

In addition to helping me meet my day-to-day needs, this support would also allow me to continue pursuing my education. I am committed to improving my situation long-term, and furthering my education is an essential part of that goal. Unfortunately, the financial pressure I am under makes it extremely difficult to focus on school or afford the materials and fees required. The \$10,000 would give me the opportunity to stay enrolled, remain focused on my studies, and work toward a better, more stable future.

This assistance would not only help me survive—it would help me move forward.

From: [teach06h](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] TESTIMONY FOR CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR HEARING ON 11/13/25
Date: Saturday, November 15, 2025 10:46:24 PM

TESTIMONY FOR :NYC COUNCIL COMMITTEES ON GOVERNMENTAL
OPERATIONS STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION AND CIVIL SERVICE
AND LABOR

HEARING DATE; 11/13/25

TOPIC: INT 1261- CORRECTING PARAPROFESSIONAL PAY

I STRONGLY SUPPORT this bill to correct the paraprofessionals pay!!

I have had paras assigned to some of my students through my years of teaching. Therefore, I have experienced the important and serious necessity for qualified and highly trained paras.

From the time that I began working in the NYC School System, I was SHOCKED to find out how UNDERPAID the paras are.

One year I had a student who was assigned a Health Paraprofessional. This para was well trained in managing the student's behavior issues according to their IEP and the Health Plan from the doctor.

This paraprofessional had the following duties:

1. STRICT MEDICINE SCHEDULE: Take the student to the nurse for medication 2 times a day.
2. HEALTH LOG: Record what the student ate for lunch, how much daily water intake, how often they went to the bathroom, etc.
3. BEHAVIOR DOCUMENTATION: Keeping detailed records of student's behavior, especially since most of the student's behavior was related to the medical issue they were born with.

4. TRAINER: Show the teacher how to manage the student when the para wasn't in the classroom.

I was amazed at how much scheduling, documenting, and training the para had to do for this student. The most difficult time was during class trips because scheduling medication and logging information were challenging. However, the para was able to administer the student's medication at the appropriate times.

PARAS ARE LIFE SAVERS:

One day during lunch recess the student had a medical crisis (teachers are not present during this time). The para knew exactly what to do and instructed another staff member to notify the nurse to bring the student's medicine. When the nurse arrived she administered the medicine and checked the vital signs. The student was able to return to class and was fine.

What would have happened if the para wasn't there to quickly evaluate this student's condition and request the nurse to bring the medicine?

Even if someone called 911, it would take time for the EMS workers to arrive and evaluate the student's condition.

As we all know, time is critical when an emergency occurs.

JUST LIKE TEACHERS, PARAPROFESSIONALS ARE REQUIRED TO DO SEVERAL JOBS:

EDUCATOR, SECRETARY, NURSE, BEHAVIORAL SPECIALIST, ETC.

QUALIFIED AND WELL TRAINED PARAPROFESSIONALS ARE PRICELESS!

I SUPPORT THE IMMEDIATE CORRECTION OF PAY FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS WHO DESERVE TO BE COMPENSATED FOR THEIR QUALIFICATIONS AND THEIR MULTIPLE ASSIGNED DUTIES.

Thank you for your time, understanding, and consideration.

Davita Brown
NYC Retired Teacher



From: [ddaajacobus](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Respect Paraprofessional Legislation #1261, November 14, 2025
Date: Sunday, November 16, 2025 6:05:54 PM
Importance: High

Good day,

My name is Donna Jacobus and I am a Paraprofessional at PS94 in district 26Queens. I am reaching out to you today to request the passing of legislation #1261, the respect para check. As a Paraprofessional, I have worked in both District 75, students with severe special needs and in District 26 as a 1 to 1 for students with autism, pica, behavior issues and diabetes.

For the last two years I have been placed in Pre-K as a classroom para. Paraprofessionals are unable to request a student or grade. Unless you are connected to a student as a language para, administration will place you where they see fit.

I have worked in almost every grade in elementary, and middle school, but Pre-k has been my biggest challenge! I went from supporting one student, to being responsible for 18.

Paraprofessionals in Pre-k and 3k are considered the additional teacher in the classroom. I work alongside my colleague, in a collaborative teaching capacity, getting a **para salary**. It's like getting a second teacher for half the price, if that. I am extremely fortunate to work alongside a wonderful teacher and human being, but it is unfair for the DOE to not recognize the additional responsibilities Classroom Paraprofessionals placed in PreK or 3K incur. I could list my daily responsibilities, however, this would become an even longer email. On many occasions, I need to bring work home with me because Paraprofessionals do not get a preparation period. Just another way we are disrespected. Like my fellow Paraprofessionals who have testified along with me, I do really enjoy my job!! We all have one common goal, it is all about the children, and supporting them as they learn and grow.

Watching my students as they move along in their academic careers, has been so rewarding.

My former students share with me when they increase a reading level or do well on an exam.

How lucky am I, that I can celebrate these milestones that mean so much to them.

Being a Paraprofessional is a wonderful profession. Getting properly compensated would take this career to another level. With your help, that can be a reality.

Thank you so very much for your time and support.

Wishing you a great day.

Sincerely,

Donna Jacobus

[Redacted signature]

Emily Smith

[REDACTED]
New York, NY, 10007
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Nov 13, 2025

To the Members of the New York City Council: Bill 1261

I am writing as a parent of a child with special needs who attends P.S. 89. My daughter, Isabella, has a dedicated paraprofessional who is absolutely essential to her education and well-being. I want to express how vital paraprofessionals are in our public schools, and why they deserve greater recognition, respect, and fair compensation for the life-changing work they do.

For Isabella, her paraprofessional is not just an aide — she is her bridge to learning, inclusion, and confidence. She helps Isabella stay engaged in lessons, navigate the classroom, and build social connections with her peers. Without this daily support, Isabella simply could not participate fully in her education or school community. The paraprofessional's presence allows her to thrive, not just attend.

Paraprofessionals are often the unsung heroes of special education. They perform complex, emotionally demanding, and deeply skilled work — supporting students with physical, developmental, and behavioral challenges. Yet despite their critical role, many are paid wages that do not reflect their responsibilities or the impact they have.

When paraprofessionals are underpaid or stretched too thin, our most vulnerable students suffer. Stability and continuity are key for children like Isabella, and every time a paraprofessional leaves for financial reasons, it disrupts a child's progress and security.

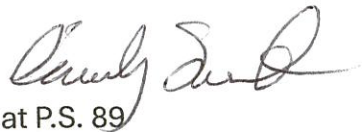
I urge the City Council to invest in paraprofessionals through better pay and support. This is not just a matter of fairness for workers — it is an investment in our children, in inclusive education, and in the moral fabric of our city.

Please stand up for the paraprofessionals who stand beside our kids every single day.

With gratitude,

Emily Anne Smith

Parent of a student at P.S. 89



Dear Members of the City Council,

With urgency, I am writing this letter to bring attention to the ongoing financial hardships not only facing me, but my fellow New York City's paraprofessionals. My name is Juan C. Campos L., a 25 year old paraprofessional currently employed at PS 239, home of the Ridgewood Rattlers, a school that also serves the community where I reside and have lived my whole life.

Each paraprofessional operates a crucial role in upholding not only the daily function and values of the schools they are employed at doing more beyond assisting teachers and students in the classroom, but the community and district. Despite their consistent relentless contributions, paraprofessionals throughout the city struggle with the uncertainty of financial sustainability ranging from housing, food, and other essential needs. This derives from a base salary of only \$32,000. While salary upgrades are sought, many of my fellow paraprofessionals, including myself, obtain secondary jobs as an additional source of income. Many of my fellow paraprofessionals have sought to leave the profession to seek a better source of income - not because of a lack of dedication or passion, but to be able to afford what they need to, especially with the rising costs in NYC. Furthermore, most paraprofessionals choose not to seek a higher education to step up as future teachers due this income restraint.

We are the front lines of education, and our value is being severely under compensated for years in reflection of our dedication and passion for our schools and students. A \$10,000 increase would be a step in the right direction for not only our sustainability, safety and success, but all supporting educating staff and our students. We as paraprofessionals hope our movement paves the way and advocacy for our fellow supporting educating staff - Parent Coordinators, Teachers, and School Aides, who too deserve their recognition. We urge you to take action to prioritize a \$10,000 increase for paraprofessionals.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to equity within our public schools.

Sincerely,

Juan C.

Written Testimony of Julian Morales on November 13, 2025 at City Council Chambers

Before the City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation and the Committee on Civil Service and Labor Regarding Introduction 1261 – The Respect Act

Thank you, Committee Chairs Lincoln Restler and Carmen De La Rosa, and all Council Members present, for the opportunity to testify in support of Intro 1261, the Respect Act. My name is Julian Morales, and today I speak in my most important role: as a parent.

As someone who grew up in New York City's public school system and needed extra support in my own early education, I know firsthand how vital paraprofessionals are—and how deeply undervalued they remain. Their work is especially critical for children with special needs, who require individualized support that cannot be met with a one-size-fits-all approach.

I'd like to quote my daughter's incredible paraprofessional, Tara Loeser, who wrote in her blog: paraprofessionals don't just "help out" teachers—they change lives.

My daughter Charlotte was diagnosed with autism at age two and began early intervention services shortly thereafter. As parents of multiple children, we quickly realized that parenting Charlotte would be a different journey—one filled with unique challenges and profound rewards.

Before entering the public school system, Charlotte attended Tiegerman Woodside, a private school where she had the same teachers and assistants for two consecutive years. She received speech therapy, occupational therapy, and counseling multiple times a week. As she approached kindergarten, we were informed that she would need to transition to a public school due to the DOE's integration policy. We were hesitant, but ultimately had no choice.

Fortunately, Charlotte's IEP included a full-time one-to-one paraprofessional. The transition was difficult—new school, new teachers, new classmates—but one constant remained: her paraprofessional, Tara. Despite having three different teachers that year, Tara stayed by Charlotte's side. Their bond became unbreakable. Though Charlotte is nonverbal, she and Tara developed a deep understanding of each other's cues and needs. Tara could be firm when needed, and Charlotte adored her—especially as her unofficial hairstylist.

As the school year ended, we advocated for Charlotte to be reunited with Tara in first grade. Charlotte's IEP recommended year-round schooling, so she attended a different school over the summer, where she thrived. Inspired by her experience with Charlotte, Tara wrote a children's book titled *My Para & Me*.

Heading into first grade, we were hopeful. Charlotte would have the same teacher as the previous year, and we prayed Tara would return as her paraprofessional. But on the first day of school, we were devastated to learn that Tara had not been assigned to Charlotte. The impact was immediate and heartbreaking. Charlotte struggled with eating, sleeping, and getting ready for school. Her anxiety was palpable.

My partner Elizabeth and I quickly shifted into advocacy mode. We pushed the administration to reunite Charlotte with Tara. Compounding the issue, Charlotte's assigned paraprofessional was injured on the third day of school, triggering a revolving door of substitutes that only heightened her distress.

We voiced our concerns to anyone who would listen and requested an urgent meeting with the school principal, assistant principals, social worker, and teacher. After six weeks of persistence, we finally met with the administration—and were relieved to learn that Charlotte would be reunited with Tara.

The change was immediate. Charlotte's demeanor improved at home and at school. She and Tara resumed their routines, and Charlotte had her lifeline back.

Tara's dedication didn't stop there. In addition to her book, she launched a website with resources for paraprofessionals, parents, and students. She's written several blogs, including one that touched our hearts deeply: *The Reason I Wrote My Para & Me*—a love letter to Charlotte.

Now is the time for the Council to do what's right: recognize and properly compensate these everyday superheroes. The UFT must ensure that paraprofessionals, school aides, and other essential staff are prioritized in the next collective bargaining agreement before November 27, 2027.

Please, come correct, UFT. Because we, the parents, will stand firmly behind our paras.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Julian Morales



From: [Liza Aronis](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Respect Para Check
Date: Sunday, November 16, 2025 8:09:38 PM

Please pass the respect paras check #1261

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Manju Suresh](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please pass the respect para check #1261 with November 14th
Date: Sunday, November 16, 2025 7:26:26 PM

[REDACTED]

Request you to please pass this for us to live with respect and dignity. We paraprofessional work very hard and yet receive very low wages to live in these current times where prices are going up for these many years.

Greetings NYC Council,

My name is Maxwell Sturm, I am a critical care and flight paramedic on Long Island in Nassau and Suffolk County. For a brief period of about one (1) year, I worked side by side with the EMS professionals of NYC during my training as a medic student. Though, my professional experience comes from the east of your borders, I would be remiss to not understand that the decisions made in NYC have a ripple effect and do in fact set the standard for policy abroad.

What I have witnessed in my tenure as an EMS professional is cause for great concern. The profession has become a turnstile of sorts for firefighting. A means to an end for individuals who are not passionate for the job, or the vulnerable people we serve. The fact of the matter is that there are many individuals amongst the EMS professionals who cannot be bothered to perfect their craft, because they understand that one day this craft will no longer pertain to them and they will not be responsible for providing such a service. What we have created in this system, led by fire professionals, is a service that does not guide it's own destiny or it's own mission. Self-governance of the EMS service by EMS professionals is imperative to ensure that the citizens of NYC receive the highest standard of care which they pay for. Instead, we lack proper geospatial coverage and proper triage of resources to unique emergencies. Where a patient whose condition requires an impassioned and knowledgeable paramedic, may instead receive an EMT longing to be a firefighter who has not touched a textbook since their one (1) month introductory training and education program.

The painting which I am attempting to illustrate for you is one of improperly invested resources. The FDNY EMS pay scale was never worth it for myself to make the short trip to NYC, it simply does not pay the bills and values the fire service in a much higher regard. This is by no means an attempt to detract from the fire service and the well deserved wages of New York's Bravest. However, the fire service benefits from a significantly lopsided fiscal appreciation for their service. We ask our EMS professionals to post on street corners and provide the fire service with dedicated houses to rest and train. We ask our EMS professionals to report to work 3-5 times per week, sacrificing their work-life balance and paying costly commuter fees. The fire service reports to work at a significantly reduced rate, complimentary to their work-life balance. We ask our EMS professionals to answer the call at a rate many times greater than that of the fire service.

Unfortunately, the job has become an unsafe, unattractive and unaffordable means to achieving a completely different job with a completely different skill set. Yet we continue to make the life of the EMS professional more difficult while enhancing the life of the fire service. When you call 911 for a fire you receive a well rested, well compensated, and well trained professional firefighter. Call for a criminal complaint and you receive a well compensated and well trained police officer. Call for a life threatening medical emergency and you just might receive a an EMT who is tired from working extra shifts, who stopped improving themselves while counting down the shifts until their "upgrade". NYC continues to waste dollars on inadequate EMT training, for individuals who plan to leave the profession before their start date. Many EMT's will leave the profession long before acquiring experience and expertise. As experience and

expertise continues to become a more rare feature, NYC's citizens become more and more vulnerable to a collapsing service and increased wait times.

It is time we start treating the EMS service and our EMS professionals like the investment that they are. Our tax dollars, which pay for this protective service, fail quite often to provide that protection. The EMS third service would be an immensely progressive first step in strengthening the backbone of the NYC health system. EMS providers should be incentivized to want to be EMS providers and nothing else. They need to be fiscally prioritized and appreciated to the same degree as the Finest and the Bravest in order to reverse the exodus of experience which we are suffering.

As I stated previously, the citizens of NYC pay taxes for a contract which states that "life and property" shall be protected by this government provided service. The service protecting property has been appropriately funded and functions adequately, the service protecting life deserves the same.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Thank you for demonstrating your willingness to come to the table and discuss this important topic.

Best Regards,

Maxwell Sturm, BS, NRP, FP-C

From: [MJ MJ](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] respect para check November 14th
Date: Sunday, November 16, 2025 7:14:47 PM

[REDACTED]

Good evening, I did paraprofessional 4 years ago,
Please help us increase our salary. Nowadays, prices in New York are rising. Every time I go to the supermarket spend \$100 even if I don't buy much. I have to buy things on sale. Moreover, my baby is almost 16 months now, and her education will require more money in the future. With my current salary, I can't even let her do what she wants to do. Just thinking about it makes me sad. Please help us respect our check, Thank you so much!

Sincerely

From: [paola.lissette.ocha.flores](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] "RESPECT check" bill
Date: Sunday, November 16, 2025 7:06:15 PM

[REDACTED]

My name is Paola Ochoa and I am both a resident of Little Neck and a staff member at P.S.094Q The David Porter School. As you know, city legislation is currently being proposed to provide paraprofessionals like me with a critical bonus to supplement what has become a comparatively low salary in New York City. Paraprofessionals perform an invaluable service for our city's children as well as for the constituency you serve. We not only provide essential support to non-native English speakers and students with learning disabilities. We are also the bridge between school administrators, teachers, and parents, and therefore the glue that holds communities together.

Please show us your support to our community by passing the law in favor of the \$10,000 bonus for paraprofessionals.

Since

Paola Ochoa

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am writing to bring urgent attention to the ongoing financial hardship facing New York City's paraprofessionals. These dedicated individuals play an essential role in the daily functioning of our schools, supporting teachers, students, and families. Yet, despite their immense contributions, paraprofessionals continue to struggle to make ends meet on a base salary of only \$32,000 per year. With the rising cost of living in New York City, many paraprofessionals are being forced to leave their positions—not because they lack passion or dedication, but because they can no longer afford to live here. Each year, we lose countless skilled and compassionate staff members who choose to move out of state for financial stability. This ongoing loss disrupts our schools, weakens the educational environment, and ultimately affects our students' success.

Our paraprofessionals serve on the front lines of education. They assist students with learning differences, provide emotional support, manage classroom organization, and ensure that every child feels seen and valued. The value they bring cannot be overstated, and their compensation should reflect their dedication, expertise, and impact. A \$10,000 salary increase would be a meaningful step toward fairness and would acknowledge the essential role these professionals play in our educational system. According to recent Department of Education data, the average cost of living in New York City exceeds \$53,000 per year for a single adult. At their current salary level, paraprofessionals fall significantly short of this threshold, even before accounting for family expenses, transportation, or housing. Many are forced to take on second jobs or rely on public assistance to survive—an unacceptable reality for those shaping the future of our children.

We urge the City Council to take action to prioritize a \$10,000 increase for paraprofessionals and to create a pathway for sustainable, living wages for all school support staff. Investing in these workers means investing in the stability, safety, and success of our schools. We, the paraprofessionals of New York City, are hoping to become a movement that inspires similar advocacy for all support staff—Parent Coordinators, Teachers, and School Aides—who deserve recognition and fair compensation for the invaluable work they perform each day.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to equity within our public schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'V. Longo'.

Veronica Longo

Paraprofessional of The Year of 2025 for District 24

From: [赵 Vivien](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please pass the respect para check
Date: Sunday, November 16, 2025 6:22:32 PM

Dear Council members,

Good evening, please pass the respect para check #1261. I have been working as a para for almost 15 years and barely got any raise of wages. Due to the inflation and high living cost of New York City, all the paraprofessionals deserve a little bit extra. Thank you.

Xiaowei Zhao
Sent from my iPhone

Helen Northmore's Written Testimony
Submitted to the Joint NYC Council Committees, Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation, and
Civil Service and Labor
on 0521-2024 - The Establishment of a Department of Emergency Medical Services
Hearing Date November 13, 2025

Should the EMS be a separate city agency? It would never have come to that question, if the Council and the Mayor's Office had acted upon the suggestions and information brought to them in years of Council hearings. Now outgoing FDNY Commissioner Tucker testified that, "(EMS) is the biggest crisis in public safety." If the EMS members felt that being in the FDNY was working, why would they want or need a separate agency? Why has it come to this? The Council is a co-equal branch of city government, the blame for nothing happening cannot always be passed on to the Mayor.

After this Hearing, what Solutions will the Council and the Mayor Put into Effect?

Response times to medical emergencies are up. Without staff, ambulances can't run. While the Emergency Medical Services has been part of the FDNY, the FDNY has not addressed two of its biggest known causes of the attrition that causes inadequate staffing: the EMS "promotional" test to firefighter, what Commissioner Tucker has now named as the front door into the firefighter position, and the lack of pay parity. In his testimony at the hearing, Commissioner Tucker would not commit to calling for EMS pay parity with other first responders or to characterizing them as members of a "uniformed" service. It was a lost opportunity to send a clear message of support to the members of the FDNY EMS. No kind words alone pay the rent.

In 2020, the then Chief of EMS, Lillian Bonsignore, testified before the Council: "Those who leave EMS do not do so without a good reason. While there are many factors that could lead a member to depart, I'd like to discuss two of the biggest. One factor that contributes to attrition among our members is the firefighter promotional exam, which enables age-eligible EMS members, to take a civil service test and be appointed as firefighters. This exam is uniquely available to EMS members, and the two most recent tests - Exam 2500 and Exam 7501 - resulted in approximately 1400 members of EMS being appointed as firefighters between the beginning of 2013 and the end of 2019.

"While we don't have specific feedback from every member who resigned, we know that another key factor in members departing is pay." "NYC Council Fire and Emergency Management Committee Hearing, Oversight: EMS Attrition", Hearing Testimony, January 28, 2020.

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4288305&GUID=3B51F7AA-A446-45D4-94B9-12A3EF630F68&Options=&Search=>

Since then, nothing has been done to address these two issues in a meaningful way.

At this hearing, Council Fire and Emergency Management Committee Chair Ariola asked why the EMTs she spoke to didn't want EMS to separate from the FDNY. FDNY Uniformed EMS & Paramedics and Fire Inspectors Union president Barzilay responded, because those are the people who want to be firefighters for the better pay.

► No matter what the budgeted headcount, there are fewer EMTs than there were seven years ago. As of September **2017**, there were **3,024 EMTs** and 902 paramedics in the FDNY EMS. (see 2017 below) According the FDNY testimony at the hearing, as of October **2025**, there were **2,776 EMTs** and 924 paramedics in the FDNY Emergency Medical Services.

► Since at least 2017, while the Emergency Medical Services has been part of the FDNY:

The FDNY has not addressed the increasing calls for emergency medical service by increasing the number of EMT and paramedic positions that are filled.

The FDNY has not addressed the yearly increase in the time it takes for an ambulance to reach the side of a patient, by increasing the number of EMT and paramedic positions that are filled.

The FDNY has not addressed the decreasing number of hospital emergency rooms resulting in longer travel times to remaining ERs and longer wait times in more crowded remaining ERs, by increasing the number of EMT and paramedic positions that are filled.

The FDNY has not addressed the yearly growth of EMS overtime by increasing the number of EMT and paramedic positions that are filled.

Due to the ongoing differences in testimony about EMS attrition rates between the FDNY staffers and the FDNY EMS union representative, shouldn't the Council request accurate answers to specific questions. At the hearing, once again an FDNY EMS officer represented EMS attrition rates that do not take into consideration those EMTs and paramedics who are no longer in the EMS but have become firefighters. A clearer understanding could be reached if the question were, for example, "In FY 2025 how many FDNY EMTs and how many FDNY paramedics and lieutenants moved out of EMS and into the FDNY firefighter position?" and "In FY2026 how many FDNY EMTs, paramedics and lieutenants will move out of EMS and into the FDNY firefighter position?"

No dollar figure was provided on the amount of money the FDNY spends to recruit and train each EMT. That money does not benefit the public if the person leaves the Emergency Medical Services and does not retain and put to use their EMT or paramedic certification. In other words, as far as the FDNY budget is concerned, it is wasted.

A Compilation of Published Statements on the FDNY EMS Budgets, Revenue, Attrition, Pay Parity

Almost 20 years after the merger, the FDNY still had not efficiently addressed responding to medical emergencies. It said it was going to accept the challenge. **"Medical emergencies have outnumbered fires since the municipal ambulance service, known as the Emergency Medical Service (EMS), merged with the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) in 1996. ² But the merger was not accompanied by a fundamental transformation of the organization and staffing of the FDNY. As a result, the FDNY does not efficiently address its most common job: responding to medical emergencies.** The FDNY leadership has recognized this major challenge. Its 2015 Strategic Plan established a goal of integrating fire and EMS services to enhance emergency medical service. ³ " Citizens Budget Commission, "Twenty Years Later, Integrating Services in The New York City Fire Department, December 9, 2015. <https://cbcny.org/research/twenty-years-later>"

The **FDNY's Strategic Plan for 2025** still includes chapters on integrating the EMS with Fire.

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/fdny/news/S2025/fdny-strategic-plan-2025> but there are no guarantees that this plan will outlive the current FDNY Commissioner.

For years, the 911 Compliance Reporting webpage has reported every month about the number and response times to 911 calls for medical assistance. Successive Councils and Mayors have not taken meaningful action to address the problem.

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/911reporting/reports/local-law-119-compliance.page>

WHILE IN THE FDNY, THE EMS HAS NOT LIVED UP TO THE MERGER PROMISE OF REDUCED RESPONSE TIMES

In 1996, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani revived "a plan to merge New York City's Emergency Medical Service into the Fire Department . . . **The Mayor's office has estimated that a merger could cut in half the eight minutes it normally takes for the ambulance service to respond to an emergency.** Such a difference would be particularly critical in cases of heart attacks, where a response in four minutes or less can be essential for survival. . . . Under the merger plan, the ambulance service, which has **3,200 workers**, would move into the department largely intact, continuing to handle most of the **1.2 million calls** it receives each year, either from the current stations or from the firehouses." "City Revives Plan for E.M.S. Merger, *New York Times*, March 2, 1995, Section A, p.1

In 1996, as part of the takeover of EMS by the FDNY, the city committed **"to a goal of a response time in 90% of potentially life-threatening call [Segments 1-3] of under six minutes for Basic Life Support Units . . . and a response time for Advanced Life Support Units to 90% of such calls in between eight and ten minutes,"** and **"a goal of a response time in 90% of non-life-threatening calls [4-10] of under ten minutes."** Memorandum of Understanding between Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani and the City Council, February 2, 1996.

The Beginning of Failed Promises - 1997

"The primary goal of the merger was to decrease response times to medical emergencies (especially life-threatening incidents such as cardiac arrest) by **increasing the availability of ambulances and improving the coordination of FDNY and EMS resources. A major proposal from the merger was the plan to establish a total of about 60 ambulance stations by the end of 1999, including the existing 16 ambulance stations.** To date, only two additional ambulance stations have opened at the following locations: Elmhurst Hospital and Western Queens Community Hospital. FDNY indicated recently that having 60 ambulance stations operational within the original three-year time frame now appears unlikely." "NYC Independent Budget Office, "Analysis of the Mayor's Executive Budget for 1998".

<https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/may97.html - c1>

2000

2000. "A January 19, 1996 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) transferred the operation of New York City's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) from the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) to the FDNY. As a result, **the FDNY Revenue Management Unit (Revenue Unit) became responsible for the billing and collection of revenues for ambulance transportation services provided, except those for Medicaid patients who are admitted to HHC hospitals.** . . . For the fiscal year ended June 30, 1999, the FDNY reported \$22.1 million in revenue collected for EMS transport services, including \$8.4 million from Medicare, \$10.7 million from commercial insurance companies, and \$3 million from self-pay patients." McCall, H. Carl, NYS Comptroller, Division of Management Audit and State Financial Services, "Fire Department of the City of New York Billing and Collection of Emergency Medical Services Fees", Report 99-N-9, <https://web.osc.state.ny.us/audits/allaudits/093000/99n9.pdf>

2009

"On January 19, 1996, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and the President of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) . . . **the MOU specifies that HHC will bill and receive all amounts** arising from EMS's **delivery of patients to HHC hospitals** pending FDNY's assumption of the billing and collection responsibilities itself.

"In 2002, FDNY assumed responsibility for billing and collection of non-Medicaid payments - third-party insurance, self-pay patients, and Medicare - for EMS services provided to patients delivered to HHC hospitals. Currently, those payments are sent to a lockbox and transferred daily to an HHC bank account. HHC remits these amounts, less any HHC deductions, as part of its quarterly payments to the City." Thompson, William C, Jr., Comptroller City of New York, "Audit Report on the Compliance of the Health and Hospitals Corporation with the Financial Provisions of the Ambulance and Pre-hospital Emergency Medical Services Memorandum of Understanding". FM08-080A. November 24, 2009 https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/FM08_080A.pdf

2010

"The significant increases in [EMS] revenue collected in Fiscal 2005 through 2009 can be attributed to the **FDNY's hiring of a billing and collections vendor.**" "Hearing on the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2011 Executive Budget, Fire Department, June 4, 2010", p. 12. https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2017/01/fy2011-fire_exec_rpt_fy_2011.pdf

2012

"The increase in revenue between Fiscal 2012 and Fiscal 2013 is primarily the result of the Department's **increase of the EMS ambulance rates** that would generate \$15.3 million, the Hospital Cost-Sharing initiative that would generate approximately \$3 million and the assumption of Montefiore North ambulance tours that would generate approximately \$2 million. . . it is estimated that approximately \$120 million is uncollected annually for EMS transport service fees. . . "Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2013 Executive Budget, Fire Department, June 1, 2012", pp. 4-5. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2012/05/fy2013-057-Fire-Department.pdf>

According to HHC financial statements, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$44,797,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." "New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements, June 30, 2013 and 2012 With Independent Auditors' [KPMG] Report Thereon", p. 41. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/New-York-City-Health-and-Hospitals-Corporation-2013.pdf>

2013

"Brookdale Hospital ceased providing twelve ambulance tours, effective September 14, 2012. The Department replaced these tours with municipal tours, adding 49 new positions to maintain the current level of ambulance coverage citywide."

"In 2013, EMS revenue is projected at approximately \$202.5 million, increasing to \$202.8 million in Fiscal 2014. The projected increase of revenue from Fiscal 2012 to Fiscal 2013 is primarily due to increase of ambulance rates that EMS charges patients for ambulance services which went into effect last year. As illustrated in the table on page six, **EMS**

revenue covers **85.7 percent of the total \$236.7 million operational costs borne by the Emergency Medical Services program area**. Approximately \$55 million of EMS's total ambulance revenue stems from HHC Medicaid payments for ambulance transports to HHC hospitals. The overwhelming majority of the remainder of fees is collected from persons who have private insurance." "Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2014 Preliminary Budget & the Fiscal 2013 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, Fire Department, March 7, 2013", pp. 1, 6-8.

https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2013/06/fy2014-057_fire.pdf

"EMS PROJECTED DEFICIT – **Because the current firefighter class is entirely comprised of EMTs and paramedics from EMS**, in anticipation of their promotions the EMS unit has been staffing up to maintain the current level of service. As a result, it is operating with approximately 291 positions over its budgeted headcount. The Department is adding \$9.8 million to cover its costs associated with the inflated headcount, of which \$8.7 million will cover salaries and \$1.1 million will cover overtime." "Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2014 Executive Budget for the Fire Department, May 14, 2013."

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2013/06/fy2014-fdny.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work for FY2013 = **\$138,085,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/New-York-City-Health-and-Hospitals-Corporation-2013.pdf>

2014

"The Preliminary budget includes an additional \$1.9 million in Fiscal 2014 and \$2.1 million in Fiscal 2015 for 43 new EMS positions. This increase will **add tours to cover the Rockaways in the vicinity of the now-closed Peninsula Hospital** and will add personnel to the new Soundview EMS Station. . . This increase will add nine tours and 36 positions to cover the Rockaways in the vicinity of the now-closed Peninsula Hospital. **FDNY has been running these tours on overtime**. This action also adds seven new positions to staff the new Soundview EMS station."

"The expected drop in EMS revenue in Fiscal 2014 compared to Fiscal 2013 is due primarily to a Medicaid rate decrease for ambulance services as well as a reduction in the number of HHC Medicaid patients. The HHC subsidy level has trended downward for several years. **The big drop in Fiscal 2013 was in part due to hospital closures following Hurricane Sandy which reduced the number of patients served**. FDNY does not expect a return to Fiscal 2009 level of HHC subsidy without a revision of the subsidy calculation. **Commercial collections remain strong and increased in Fiscal 2013 due to the increase of ambulance rates that EMS charges patients for ambulance services**. Actual commercial collections may increase over projections because FDNY is expecting payments from Medicaid MNO plans.

"Last year the FDNY total projections for **EMS revenue were \$202.5 million for Fiscal 2013 increasing to \$202.8 million in Fiscal 2014**. In Fiscal 2014 EMS revenue is projected to cover only 69 percent of EMS' operational costs budgeted in the Department. This is a significantly lower level than achieved in recent years. It should also be noted that **EMS increased its ambulance tours as private hospitals have left the 911 ambulance system**. Unfortunately, neither the PMMR nor the FDNY monthly statistical reports give the number of FDNY ambulance tours, both report the average daily ALS and BLS tours for the entire 911 system." "Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2015 Preliminary Budget & the Fiscal 2014 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, Fire Department", March 27, 2014, pp. 6-9. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2014/07/fy2015-057-Fire-Department.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2014, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$140,461,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." "New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements, June 30, 2013 and 2012 With Independent Auditors' [KPMG] Report Thereon", p. 41. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC.pdf>

2015

"The Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Plan includes \$2.8 million in Fiscal 2015 and \$11.2 million in Fiscal 2016 and decreasing in the outyears for 181 new EMS positions. This increase will add 45 new basic life support (BLS) tours to cover the South Bronx, western Queens, and Staten Island in with a goal of reducing response time in the targeted areas.

"As of February 2015, The Department's EMS actual headcount is 3,768, which is 161 positions above the Fiscal 2015 budgeted headcount. According to the Fire Department, **the current attrition rate for Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) is 13.5 percent**, 8.5 percentage points higher than the attrition rate for firefighters. . . When FDNY offers the next promotional exam for firefighter positions, the Department expects to fill at least one academy class with FDNY EMT's, EMT's will eventually (sic) transition to roles as firefighters, thus leaving the EMS Department.

"The Fiscal 2016 budgeted **overtime** for EMS is \$36 million dollars, an increase of \$6.9 million since Fiscal 2015. **The increase in overtime projected for Fiscal 2016 is attributed to the 45 new EMS tours** that will add 181 new EMS positions and the 24 new EMS Lieutenants. According to the Department, the new positions and tours **will run on overtime** until the Department can reach its budgeted headcount in late Fiscal 2017. **Given the hiring schedule for firefighters, the Department may struggle to maintain EMS headcount.**

"EMS Service Level Maintenance. The November Plan includes baseline funding of \$2.2 million in Fiscal 2015 and in the outyears to support 46 new EMS positions. **This increase in funding will support seven BLS and five ALS tours that had previously been run by the Long Island College Hospital.** The FDNY has been **running these tours on overtime since the hospital closed** on May 22, 2014 and this technical adjustment provides baseline funding.

"Ambulance Transport Revenue. The Department generates revenue from EMS ambulance transports. . . Payments from Medicare are for ambulance transport fees generated from patients who are recipients of Medicare. Commercial refers to payments received from private insurance companies. Self-Pay is the amount of payments received from individual patients. Bad Debt is the amount collected by selling unpaid debt to collection agencies. The Health and Hospital Corporation (HHC) subsidy paid to FDNY is based on a variety of factors including HHC's Medicaid revenue and the number of Medicaid patients discharged from HHC hospitals.

"Due to a protracted negotiation with NYSDOH, FDNY did not bill the State for any Medicaid- HMO transports revenue this year. **The Department resumed billing in Fiscal 2015, retroactively and FDNY expects to collect Medicaid managed care payments for Fiscal 2013 and 2014, which will eventually leave overall collections in those years at about the same level projected for Fiscal 2015 and 2016 was being paid directly for transports by the State rather than a commercial enterprise, which explains the increase in projected revenue in Fiscal 2015 and Fiscal 2016.** . . The Medicaid revenue collected by FDNY is offset partially by the drop in the HHC subsidy." Report on the Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2015 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, Fire Department, March 24, 2015, pp. 2-3, 11-16. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2015/06/fy2016-fdny.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2015, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$177,046,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." "New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements, June 30, 2015 and 2014 (With Independent Auditors' [KPMG] Report Thereon)", pp. 40-41. https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/Health_Hospitals_Corp_Financial_Statements.pdf

2016

"**EMS Supervisor Fly Car Pilot Program.** The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan includes \$1.4 million in Fiscal 2016 and approximately \$1 million in Fiscal 2017 for an EMS pilot program to reduce response times to medical emergencies by creating non- transporting ALS support fly cars to respond to ALS calls. (see page 13)

"FDNY plans to collect approximately \$87.6 million from various miscellaneous revenue sources in Fiscal 2017, not including EMS ambulance revenue.

"In February 2016, TransCare, a private ambulance company that participates in the 911 EMS system in New York City through contractual agreements with several private hospitals filed for bankruptcy. According to the Department, **TransCare operated 27 ambulances in the Bronx and Manhattan for a total of 81 ambulance tours. The Department has been monitoring TransCare's financial situation and has developed contingency plans for both short and long term solutions in anticipation of this event. To ensure uninterrupted EMS services, the Department implemented additional ambulance units staffed on overtime to fill the vacancies created by TransCare** and is working with the private hospitals to fill those vacancies with other providers. While FDNY was prepared for this scenario and was able to fill those tours on overtime, this situation highlights the risk in the Department's reliance on private ambulance tours.

"While the Department received an additional nine ALS to help maintain EMS service levels in Queens, in the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget, EMS call volume is projected to increase. **Because of the increased call volume combined with the uncertainty of the future of private ambulance companies, FDNY/EMS will likely need to operate more ambulance tours in the future just to maintain current response times.**

"With the April 2016 class, the Department will expand its EMT class size by 66 percent to 150 recruits. Furthermore, the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget reflects additional EMS training and medical support staff to support the Department's expanded class size. However, according to the Department, **the EMS class size is limited in capacity to approximately 150-180 EMT recruits due to serious space restraints and outdated facilities at the academy on Fort Totten. The Department will need to further expand its training academy class size beyond its current capacity because it is likely that the Department will continue to respond to more medical emergencies in the future. . . The Department has made some efforts to renovate its EMS academy, but the Department will need to direct more capital resources to its EMS academy to meet the expanded role EMS will have in the Department.**

"It is evident that there is an increased need for the FDNY to respond to medical emergencies. To support the Department's efforts to maintain or reduce response times to medical emergencies, the Department will require additional resources. . . **EMS overtime has been increasing since 2012. . . even as headcount increases so does EMS overtime.**

"The Department's headcount increased by 84 positions since the Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget, of those 84 positions, 61 positions are related to the additional EMS tours and Rikers Island tours. The other 24 positions will bolster the staff at the training academy.

"The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan includes \$2.5 million in Fiscal 2016 and \$2.6 million in Fiscal 2017 for 37 positions (33 paramedics and four EMS lieutenants) and nine ALS tours. **The additional nine tours will replace three voluntary tours at North LIJ Hospital and six voluntary tours at NY Hospital Queens to maintain current response times in Queens.** The Department plans to deploy the additional ambulance crews in order to maintain existing EMS service levels in Queens.

"The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan includes \$748,835 and \$1.4 million and 24 positions (11 EMT's, 11 paramedics, and two lieutenants). **The FDNY will provide two EMS ambulances (one ALS and one BLS) full-time at Rikers to reduce the high demand from Rikers for ambulance for prisoner transports.** According to the Department this will improve response times across Western Queens, since these two ambulances will take over the majority of Rikers transports.

"EMS Training Staff and Medical Support Staff. The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan includes \$999,694 and \$1.5 million in Fiscal 2017 and in the outyears for 23 positions, **including four lieutenants to support the Department's effort to expand its EMS academy class size. The additional training stuff will provide better supervision and data support to assist in managing dispatch triage protocols. The additional medical support staff will provide appropriate oversight, training, quality assurance and respond to multiple challenges such as Ebola and triaging patients.**

"EMS Supervisor Fly Cars Pilot. The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan includes \$1.4 million in Fiscal 2016 and \$1 million in Fiscal 2017 to support the creation of ten non-transporting ALS support fly cars. The fly cars will respond to ALS calls with a goal of reducing response times in the Bronx. **The pilot program will redeploy paramedics from current ALS ambulances and then will replace those tours with BLS ambulances, essentially doubling the number of ALS ambulances.** After Fiscal 2017, the Department will evaluate response times and the effectiveness of this model and seek to implement it citywide, if the pilot is deemed successful. The Department will use existing EMS vehicles, which provide first-line supervision of the ambulances in service daily.

"EMS Tactical Response Pilot. The Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan includes \$480,054 in Fiscal 2016 and \$353,794 in Fiscal 2017 to create a tactical response group. The group would consist of five BLS ambulances that would be deployed in neighborhood(s) that experience the heaviest call volumes. The current procedure is for ambulances to return to the same neighborhood after they complete each response. However, these five ambulances would be directed to move based on response times and call volume. According to the Department, this pilot program would also provide greater flexibility in responding to major incidents. Since the ambulances could be assigned to the incident without removing ambulances from other geographic areas of needed ambulance coverage.

"The Department generates revenue from EMS ambulance transports. The table below shows how much revenue FDNY has received from several sources during the past five years for emergency medical services. Payments from Medicare are for ambulance transport fees generated from patients who are recipients of Medicare. Commercial refers to payments received from private insurance companies. Self-Pay is the amount of payments received from individual patients. Bad Debt is the amount collected by selling unpaid debt to collection agencies. The Health and Hospitals (H+H) subsidy paid to FDNY is based on a variety of factors including H+H's Medicaid revenue and the number of Medicaid patients discharged from H+H hospitals.

EMS Actual Revenue						EMS Projected Revenue
Revenue Source	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
Medicare	\$27,921	\$28,357	\$23,846	\$25,955	\$25,482	\$26,555
Commercial	83,283	88,655	100,475	73,297	63,493	74,098
Medicaid	0	0	0	0	28,005	32,021
Self-Pay	6,230	7,417	8,098	8,383	6,427	8,350
Bad Debt Sold	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total FDNY Collections	\$111,983	\$117,434	\$124,429	\$132,419	\$123,408	\$141,024
H+H Subsidy	\$56,851	\$59,905	\$54,770	\$37,724	\$32,585	\$30,600
Total Revenue	\$168,834	\$177,339	\$179,199	\$170,143	\$155,993	\$171,624

Source: FDNY

"Due to a protracted negotiation with NYSDOH, FDNY did not bill the State for any Medicaid- HMO transports revenue in Fiscal 2015. **The Medicaid revenue for Fiscal 2013 and 2014 is not reflected in the table above.** However, the Department began to retroactively bill in Fiscal 2015, and FDNY fully collected approximately \$30 million in Medicaid managed care payments for Fiscal 2014. The Medicaid revenue collected by FDNY is partially offset by the H+H subsidy. It should be noted that the H+H subsidy is consistently decreasing since Fiscal 2011, largely in part of the decrease in Medicaid revenue collected by H+H over the years." "Report on the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report Fire Department March 10, 2016", pp. 2, 4,6,12-17. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2016/05/057-FDNY.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2016, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$209,850,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." "New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements, June 30, 2016 and 2015 (With Independent Auditors' [KPMG] Report Thereon)", p. 41.

2017

EMS Rank	# of Staff
Chief of EMS	1
Assistant Chief	1
Deputy Assistant Chief	3
Division Chief	10
Deputy Chief	23
Captain	76
Lieutenant	491
Paramedic	902
EMT	3,024
TOTAL	4,531
<i>Source: FDNY; September 30, 2017</i>	

Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2018 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York, March 8, 2018", p. 17.

"The EMS actual overtime expenditure shows a steady increase from Fiscal 2013 to Fiscal 2016, and a decline projected starting in Fiscal 2017. Meanwhile, EMS headcount shows a big increase between Fiscal 2014 and Fiscal 2016, then remains flat starting in Fiscal 2016. . . **the lower the EMS headcount, the higher overtime spending was for FDNY from Fiscal 2013 and Fiscal 2015.** The expansion of the EMS budget since Fiscal 2014 is in response to the increase in the emergency call volume as shown on the chart on the previous page. The headcount increase should allow EMS to not only respond appropriately to emergency calls, but also to rely on overtime to staff ambulance tours.

"The chart below indicates that revenue remains flat despite the increase in the number of ambulance runs.

EMS Actual Revenue						EMS Projected Revenue
Revenue Source	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
Medicare	\$27,921	\$28,357	\$23,846	\$25,955	\$25,482	\$26,555
Commercial	83,283	88,655	100,475	73,297	63,493	74,098
Medicaid	0	0	0	0	28,005	32,021
Self-Pay	6,230	7,417	8,098	8,383	6,427	8,350
Bad Debt Sold	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total FDNY Collections	\$111,983	\$117,434	\$124,429	\$132,419	\$123,408	\$141,024
H+H Subsidy	\$56,851	\$59,905	\$54,770	\$37,724	\$32,585	\$30,600
Total Revenue	\$168,834	\$177,339	\$179,199	\$170,143	\$155,993	\$171,624

Source: FDNY

"Of the total EMS actual revenue in Fiscal 2016, 53 percent of the revenue came from commercial, 21 percent from Medicaid, 20 percent from Medicare, and five percent from self-paying individuals. This percentage breakdown remains similar for the projected revenues in Fiscal 2017 and Fiscal 2018. The projected revenue for Medicare, Medicaid, and self-pay in Fiscal 2017 and Fiscal 2018 remain unchanged, but there is a \$3.6 million, or five percent increase in commercial from Fiscal 2017 to Fiscal 2018. This increase is projected based on the City's ambulance rate increase, effective starting in March 2017.

"According to the FDNY, the Department is raising the price of ambulance rides to help cover the costs of a 10 percent raise the Administration negotiated with the FDNY and EMS workers. The City struck a \$120 million contract deal with Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics in June 2016. The deal with two unions representing 3,700 FDNY employees, including EMS officers and fire protection inspectors, will provide 10 percent raises over seven years.

"Beginning in March 2017, ambulance rates will increase by 10 percent. The cost of a basic life support (BLS) ambulance ride will increase from \$704 to \$755, while the cost of an advanced life support (ALS) will go up from \$1,190 to \$1,310 for a service level 1 ride, and increase from \$1,290 to \$1,420 for a service level 2 ambulance." "Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2018 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York, March 9, 2017". pp. 8, 14-15. <http://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2017/03/057-FDNY.pdf>"

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2017, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$183,691,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." "New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements, June 30, 2017 and 2016 (With Independent Auditors' [KPMG] Report Thereon), p. 45. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC-Financial-Statements-6-30-17.pdf>

2018

"According to the Department, the current attrition rate for EMS is 7.53 percent, which is three percentage points higher than uniform attrition rate. The attrition rate is higher among Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) than firefighters because of a lower average salary, when compared to other employers in the health care field. EMTs also often leave FDNY for other health care careers, and some transition to other jobs within the Department. **Funding for EMS is budgeted in Units of Appropriation 009 and 010.**

"The Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Plan includes \$1.1 million in Fiscal 2018 and baseline funding of \$2.1 million in Fiscal 2019 and in the outyears for 36 civilian positions to support the creation of a Joint Operations Center for Fire/EMS dispatch, as

well as funding to support the development of FDNY's new computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. Of the total funding, EMS' portion is \$492,000 in Fiscal 2018 and \$984,000 in Fiscal 2019 and in the outyears. Additionally, of the 36 civilian positions, 18 are for EMS.

"The Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Plan includes \$442,000 in Fiscal 2018 and \$855,000 in Fiscal 2019 and in the outyears to support **15 new EMS positions to support three BLS tours previously operated by New York Community Hospital** to help maintain existing EMS service levels. The New York Community Hospital terminated the three BLS tours on December 31, 2017.

"Given the Department's history of spending above the budgeted overtime amount, the Council questions whether the funding level for EMS operations is adequate. The Department should consider rightsizing the EMS overtime budget in a similar manner to how it adjusted the uniform overtime budget in the Fiscal 2018 Budget.

"Of the total EMS actual revenue in Fiscal 2017, 43 percent of the revenue came from commercial, 24 percent from Medicaid, 12 percent from Medicare, and five percent from self-paying individuals. This percentage breakdown remains similar for the projected revenues in Fiscal 2018 and Fiscal 2019, but there is a \$6.9 million, or nine percent increase in commercial from Fiscal 2017 actual revenue to Fiscal 2018 projected revenue. **This increase is due to the increased ambulance rate that went into effect in March 2017.**

"According to the FDNY, the Department raised the price of ambulance rides to help cover the costs of a 10 percent raise the Administration negotiated with the FDNY and EMS workers. The City struck a \$120 million contract deal with Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics in June 2016. The deal with two unions representing 3,700 FDNY employees, including EMS officers and fire protection inspectors, will provide 10 percent raises over seven years. The BLS ambulance ride increased from \$704 to \$755, while ALS ride went up from \$1,190 to \$1,310 for a service level 1 ride, and increased from \$1,290 to \$1,420 for a service level 2 ambulance." "Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Budget and the Fiscal 2018 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York, March 8, 2018", pp. 12, 14-15, 18-19. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2018/03/FY19-Fire-Department-of-New-York.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2018, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$192,692,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." "Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules and Report of Independent Certified Public Accounts [Grant Thornton] New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) June 30, 2018 and 2017", p. 45. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC-2018.pdf>

2019

"As of February 2019, the Department is . . . **367 positions under its budgeted EMS headcount.**

"Additionally, headcount remains unchanged when compared to the Fiscal 2019 Adopted Budget. **Funding for EMS is budgeted in Units of Appropriation 009 and 010.**

"the Department has also included funding for additional EMS academy staffing due to the increased number of EMS classes, and to purchase medications that will be used during training. **Although EMS' role is increasing, there is no new funding to address the capital needs at the EMS academy on Fort Totten in the Fiscal 2019-2023 Preliminary Capital Commitment Plan.**

"On average, the Department spent approximately \$40.7 million on EMS overtime from Fiscal 2015 to 2018. Additionally, on average, the Department spent \$10.3 million more than the budgeted amount each year. In Fiscal 2018, the Department spent an additional \$18.5 million on EMS overtime.

"The Department generates revenue from EMS ambulance transports. The table below shows how much revenue FDNY received from several sources during the past five years for emergency medical services. Payments from Medicare are for ambulance transport fees generated from patients who are recipients of Medicare. Commercial refers to payments received from private insurance companies. Self-Pay is the amount of payments received from individual patients. The Health and

Hospitals (H+H) subsidy paid to FDNY is based on a variety of factors, including H+H's Medicaid revenue and the number of Medicaid patients discharged from H+H hospitals. **The chart below indicates that revenue has been steadily increasing since Fiscal 2015. The projected revenue for Fiscal 2020 is \$182.2 million."**

EMS Actual Revenue (Dollars in thousands)					EMS Projected Revenue	
Revenue Source	FY 2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Medicare	\$25,482	\$30,045	\$21,536	\$21,671	\$21,594	\$21,594
Commercial	63,493	78,524	78,929	84,961	77,671	77,671
Medicaid	28,005	31,225	43,795	46,341	49,465	49,465
Self-Pay	6,427	8,070	8,459	9,020	9,267	9,267
Total FDNY Collections	\$123,408	\$147,864	\$152,719	\$161,993	\$157,997	\$157,997
H&H Subsidy	\$32,585	\$32,022	\$29,923	\$29,384	\$24,200	\$24,200
TOTAL, Revenue	\$155,993	\$179,886	\$182,643	\$191,378	\$182,197	\$182,197

Source: FDNY

Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department, March 7, 2019, pp. 3,4,7,11,12, 13, 15, 28, 32. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2019/03/FDNY1.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2019, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$187,713,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." " Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules and Report of Independent Certified Public Accounts [Grant Thornton] New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) June 30, 2019 and 2018", p. 48. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC-Financial-Statements-2019.pdf>

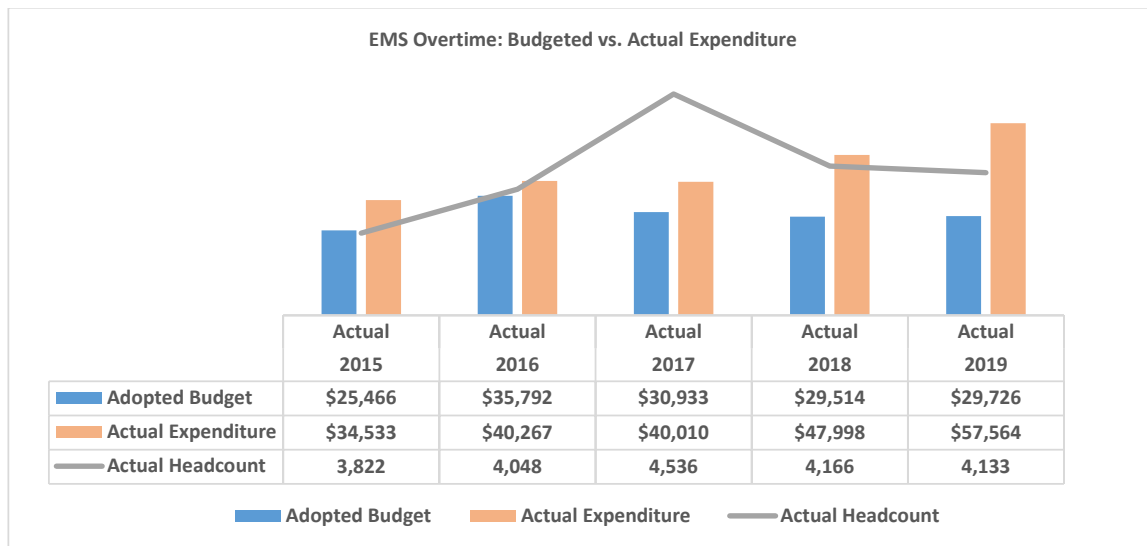
2020

"Recognizing that EMS staff are the lowest paid first responders in NYC, the Council's in its Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Budget Response, called for an increase in EMS staff pay rates. FDNY's Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics earn less than their counterparts in many other U.S cities do. Furthermore, FDNY EMS salaries are significantly lower than firefighter salaries. The starting salary for an EMT at the Department is \$35,254. It is \$48,237 for a paramedic. A first- year firefighter earns 24 percent more than an EMT and nine percent less than a paramedic. The difference in a firefighter salary and those of EMTs and paramedics grows to 68 and 31 percent respectively after five years.

"The different pay rates for uniformed and EMS create staffing challenges for the Department as many EMS workers apply for a promotion to become a firefighter. According to the Department, the Fiscal 2019 attrition rate for EMS was 13.2 percent, which is 8.6 percentage points higher than the Fiscal 2019 firefighter attrition rate of 4.6 percent. The attrition rate is higher among EMTs than firefighters because of a lower average salary, when compared to other employers in the healthcare field. EMTs also often leave FDNY for other healthcare careers and some transition to other jobs within the Department. This raises concerns around the Department's retention and budgetary strategy for EMS personnel.

"The EMS budget and headcount reflects a net increase of \$1.3 million and 247 positions respectively when compared to Fiscal 2020 Adopted Budget. This increase is due to an increase in the PS budget of \$3.4 million offset by a decrease of \$2 million in the OTPS budget. The increase in the PS budget is for an increased headcount. **The addition is not a new need**, the increase was planned in prior budgets for additional EMS responders.

"Through January 2020, EMS has spent \$34.1 million on EMS overtime allocated in the Fiscal 2020 budget. EMS is on track to spend \$58.5 million on overtime in Fiscal 2020, \$16.8 more than the adopted budget of \$41.7 million. This follows a trend of EMS spending more than the budgeted amount for overtime.



Dollars in Thousands

"EMS has seen an increase in workload since Fiscal 2016. As a result, the program has grown in headcount and funding. **[BUT LOOK at Actual Headcount↑]**

2020 (cont'd)

"Over the last five years, FDNY has generated an average of \$177.8 million in revenue, with \$76.9 million coming in payments from private insurance companies. For Fiscal 2020, the FDNY is projecting \$227.8 million from all sources. Of the total EMS actual revenue in Fiscal 2019, 44 percent came from commercial, 27 percent from Medicaid, 11 percent from Medicare, and approximately five percent from self-paying individuals. As the table above indicates, revenue from self-paying individuals has been steadily increasing year to year due to the increase in ambulance transport rates.

Finance Division Briefing Paper

Fire Department

EMS Actual Revenue <i>Dollars in Thousands</i>						EMS Projected Revenue	
Revenue Source	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
Medicare	\$25,482	\$30,045	\$21,536	\$21,671	\$20,433	\$20,555	\$20,555
Commercial	63,493	78,524	78,929	84,961	78,865	79,565	82,898
Medicaid HMO / CPE	28,005	31,225	43,795	46,341	48,609	58,000	58,000
Self-Pay	6,427	8,070	8,459	9,020	9,908	8,350	8,350
Total FDNY Collections	123,407	147,864	152,719	161,993	157,815	166,470	169,803
H&H Subsidy	32,585	32,022	29,923	29,384	21,494	61,300	61,300
TOTAL, Revenue	\$155,992	\$179,886	\$182,643	\$191,378	\$179,309	\$227,770	\$231,103

"The FDNY is working on a new project with H+H and the Office of Management and Budget to develop an ancillary reimbursement strategy for Medicaid-related claims. This effort is to coordinate reimbursement so it closely reflects actual expenses associated with ambulance costs. The Fiscal 2020 budget added \$2.6 million for Fiscal 2020 and \$1.3 million for Fiscal 2021 for a consultant to engage a consultant to assist with the Fire Department's strategy to increase reimbursement for ambulance transports." "Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department, March 3, 2020", pp.14, 15, 17, 19, 31. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2020/02/057-FDNY.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2020, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$375,742,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." " Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules and Report of Independent Certified Public Accounts [Grant Thornton] New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) June 30, 2020 and 2019", p. 48.

<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC-Financial-Statements-2020.pdf>

Citizens Budget Commission 2020. - **"In addition the Fire Department expects to collect \$96 million more in ambulance fees in fiscal year 2021 and \$128 more annually in fiscal years 2022 to 2024 through "strategies to increase reimbursement."**¹⁷ **This would represent a 42 percent increase in fiscal year 2021 and a 56 percent increase in fiscal years 2022 to 2024.** In fiscal year 2019 ambulance fee revenue was \$179 million, a shortfall against the budgeted amount of \$205 million." Citizens Budget Commission, "NYC Fiscal 2021 Adopted Budget, Short-term Balance, Long Term Challenge", July, 21, 2020. <https://cbcny.org/research/nyc-fy2021-adopted-budget> City of New York, Office of Management and Budget, email to Citizen Budget Commission staff (July 18, 2020)

2021

"The Preliminary Plan includes a total of \$1.7 million to **support a pilot program to change the way the City responds to mental health emergencies**. This program will replace the typical police response. **Ambulances staffed with two EMTs and one social worker will respond to mental health emergencies**. The pilot program will be in Northern Manhattan, specifically East and Central Harlem, chosen because those are high need communities that the City and Department identified. This area had the most mental health calls in 2019, and the first 11 months of 2020, and the H+H hospitals, the East Harlem Support and Connection Center, and EMS facilities were all factors for the location. The total funding for the program is \$1 million in Fiscal 2021 and \$2.5 million in Fiscal 2022 split between the FDNY and H+H. FDNY's portion is \$511,000 in Fiscal 2021 and \$1.2 million in Fiscal 2022, and will support 21 positions in each fiscal year 16 EMTs, three lieutenants, one captain and one Deputy Chief. The pilot is expected to launch this spring.

"An additional \$14.5 million of federal funding in Fiscal 2021 and \$20.8 million in Fiscal 2022 will replace City funding for ambulance transports. The Department has successfully pursued Certified Public Expenditure (CPE) as a method to increase reimbursement from Medicare and Medicaid ambulance transport. The FDNY already receives reimbursements from Medicare and Medicaid, CPE would increase reimbursement rates. Fiscal 2021 is the first time the FDNY will receive CPE funds and as of the Preliminary Plan, the figure will be greater than expected.

"EMS transports are becoming a larger source of revenue for the Department . . . In addition to CPE, EMS revenue is expected to grow due to increases in ambulance billing rates. The table below outlines EMS charges for services since October of 2002, this rule adds new charges for treatment in place, where an individual will receive treatment onsite and not be transported. Before January 1, 2021, the Department would not bill for this service.

FDNY Ambulance Billing Rates

Type of Service	October 2002	February 2009	March 2012	March 2017	January 2021
Basic Life Support Ambulance	\$420	\$515	\$704	\$775	\$900
Basic Life Support Ambulance Treatment in Place					\$630
Advanced Life Support Ambulance 1	\$535	\$750	\$1,190	\$1,310	\$1,525
Advanced Life Support Ambulance 2		\$850	\$1,290	\$1,420	\$1,625
Advanced Life Support Ambulance Treatment in Place					\$1,050
Additional Charges:					
Mileage	\$6/mile	\$7/mile	\$12/mile	\$15/mile	\$15/mile
Provision of Oxygen	\$50	\$50	\$60	\$66	\$66

* Each figure shows the charge for Fire Department ambulance transport or service

"The November 2020 Plan **paused the Fly Car Pilot program** in the Bronx and the planned expansion. The pilot had 60 positions associated, which have been reallocated within the Department, the 225 positions associated with the expansion
hbayernorthmore
November 15, 2025
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had not been hired yet and does not impact current employees. The program is planned to resume in Fiscal 2023, and the positions will return.

"The Fiscal 2022 Preliminary Budget adds 21 positions to EMS in Fiscal 2021 and 2022 to operate the Mental Health Teams Pilot program.

"The National Ambulance Contract brought more than 350 ambulances from across the country, for April and May of 2020.

"The City Council attached one term and condition to the Fire Department's Fiscal 2021 Budget that requires the Department to report the demographics of its staff.

"As the lowest paid first responders in New York City, the Council has continually called for an increase in the salaries of EMS members. In May 2020 the Committee on Fire and Emergency Management, with the support of the majority of the Council recognized that EMS personnel in New York City should be compensated similar to firefighters and police officers.

"During COVID-19, EMS personnel went through a traumatic and unparalleled increase in call volume and member illness. With record highs in call volume and members medical leave usage during the peak of the pandemic, the City saw the extreme lengths that EMS personnel go through, and their importance to the safety of New Yorkers. In New York City, the starting salary for an EMT is \$35,254, \$48,237 for a paramedic, and \$43,904 for a firefighter, after five years a firefighter makes \$85,292, \$50,604 for an EMT, and \$65,226 for a paramedic.

"Using figures provided by the Fire Department, the average Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) makes \$32,000 less than the average firefighter, and paramedics make \$14,000 less compared to firefighters. When fringe benefits, including pensions, are factored in the average EMT earns \$134,000 less and the average paramedic makes \$108,000 less.

"The differing pay rates for uniformed and EMS staff create challenges for the Department, **as many EMS staff apply for the promotion to firefighter exam.** The attrition rates for EMS include resignations, retirements, and promotion to firefighter, not movement within EMS such as from EMT to paramedic. **After a promotion to firefighter exam is offered, attrition rates for EMS significantly increase. The last exam was offered in December of 2016, with results posted on May 17, 2017. EMS attrition rates for the following years are skewed, reflecting in Fiscal 2018 was 20.6 percent, 13.2 percent in Fiscal 2019, 5.4 percent in Fiscal 2020, 5.28 percent so far in Fiscal 2021, with no promotions to firefighter this fiscal year.** Over the same period attrition rates for uniformed members were 4.1 percent in Fiscal 2018, 4.6 percent in Fiscal 2019 and Fiscal 2020, and so far is 4.2 percent in Fiscal 2021. However, to average these together over the nearly four years, the EMS attrition rate is 11.1 percent while the uniformed attrition rate is 4.34 percent." "Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department, March 19, 2021", pp. 7, 8,15.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2021/03/FDNY-.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2021, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$345,911,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules and Report of Independent Certified Public Accounts [Grant Thornton] New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) June 30, 2021 and 2020", p. 49. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC-Financial-Statements-2021.pdf>

2022

"The Adopted Budget included \$51.5 million in Fiscal 2022, the FDNY anticipated using the funding for the Behavioral Health Emergency Assistance Response Division (B-HEARD) to fund mental health focused emergency response. However, the November 2021 Plan included a technical adjustment to reverse the federal funding and fund the program with City-tax levy because the City receives federal funding for ambulance transport reimbursement, and was not able to fund this program federally and receive federal reimbursement for ambulance transport."

"The Fiscal 2023 Preliminary Plan includes a funding swap that increases federal funding and decreases City in EMS revenue by \$19.3 million in Fiscal 2022 and \$15.3 million Fiscal 2023 and the outyears. **This federal increase is primarily due to revenue being higher this year and an anticipation that the increase will continue.** As ambulance transports decreased significantly due to COVID-19, the Department and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) believe **the increase is from ambulance runs increases following the pandemic.**

"Recognizing that EMS staff are the lowest paid first responders in NYC, **in its last three , Preliminary Budget Responses, the Council called for an increase in EMS staff pay rates**, which was partially addressed in the November 2021 Plan, following a new agreement between the City and the union that represents EMTs, paramedics, and fire inspectors. The wage growth for EMTs and Paramedics increases labor costs by \$18.3 million in Fiscal 2022, and baselines \$22.1 million in Fiscal 2023. The contract covers June 2018 through July 2022; Local 2507 will negotiate its next contract in 2022 with the new Administration.

"FDNY's Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics earn less than their counterparts in New York. The starting salary for an EMT at the Department is \$39,386. It is \$53,891 for a paramedic. A first- year firefighter earns \$43,904, 11 percent more than an EMT and 22 percent less than a paramedic. The difference in a firefighter salary and those of EMTs and paramedics grows to 43 and 11 percent respectively after five years. **The different pay rates for uniformed and EMS create staffing challenges for the Department as many EMS workers apply for a promotion to become a firefighter. According to the Department, the Fiscal 2019 attrition rate for EMS was 13.2 percent, which is 8.6 percentage points higher than the Fiscal 2019 firefighter attrition rate of 4.6 percent.** The attrition rate is higher among EMTs than firefighters because of a lower average salary, when compared to other employers in the healthcare field. The attrition rate for EMS was 5.4 percent and 6.7 percent in Fiscal 2020 and 2021 respectively, while it was 4.6 and 4.1 percent for Firefighters in the same years. EMTs also often leave FDNY for other healthcare careers and some transition to other jobs within the Department. **This raises concerns around the Department's retention and budgetary strategy for EMS personnel.**" "Report on the Fiscal 2023 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2022 Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York, March 9, 2022, pp. 3,6, 9-10. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2022/03/FDNY.pdf>

FY 2022 FDNY EMS Revenue

"The Department also collects revenue from Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulance transports. In 2022, total EMS revenue is projected at **\$376 million**. EMS is expected to receive more revenue in 2022 compared to 2021 due to efforts by the Department to increase reimbursement for ambulance transport." Jiha, Jacques, Ph.D. Director, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Bill de Blasio, Mayor, "The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2022, Message of the Mayor", p. 154. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/mm4-21.pdf>

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2022, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$184,894,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." " Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules and Report of Independent Certified Public Accounts [Grant Thornton] New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) June 30, 2022 and 2021", p. 50. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC-Financial-Statements-2022.pdf>

2023 FDNY EMS Projected Expense & Revenue

In May, 2023 the fee for FDNY EMS treatment and transport by an Advanced Life Support ambulance staffed by two paramedics, to patients with life-threatening medical emergencies, rose to **\$1,692+**.

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/fdny/downloads/pdf/about/fee-schedule-ambulance.pdf>

Projected Expense, 2023 Appropriation, **\$394,622,175**. *The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2023*, "Expense, Revenue, Contract", Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Jacques Jiha, Ph.D., Director. pp. 77E-81E.

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/erc4-22.pdf>

"The Department is budgeted for **820 daily ambulance tours**. . . The Department anticipates that it will respond to over 1.5 million medical incidents in 2023 . . . " According to the Mayor's Executive Budget FY 2023, "in 2023 total EMS revenue is projected at **\$371 million**". . . " Jiha, Jacques, Ph.D. Director, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Eric Adams, Mayor, "The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2023, Message of the Mayor", p. 145.

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/mm4-22.pdf>

Is the following in addition to the above or altogether in FY 2023 ?

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2023, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$203,162,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules and Report of Independent Certified Public Accounts [Grant Thornton] New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) June 30, 2023 and 2022", p. 48.

<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC-Financial-Statements-2023.pdf>

2024 FDNY EMS Projected Expense & Revenue

Projected FDNY EMS FY2024 Expense - **\$410,151,174**. *The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2024*, "Expense, Revenue, Contract", Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Jacques Jiha, Ph.D., Director. pp. 79E- 83E.

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/erc4-23.pdf>

"The Department also collects revenue from Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulance transports. In 2024, total EMS revenue is projected at **\$392.7 million**." Jiha, Jacques, Ph.D. Director, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Eric Adams, Mayor, "The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2024, Message of the Mayor", p. 158.

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/mm4-23.pdf>

Is the following innaddition to the above or altogether in FY 2024 ?

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2024, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$452,145,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York, Basic Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules, June 30, 2024 (With Independent Auditors' Report [KPMG] in Accordance with Government Auditing Standards Thereon)", p. 40.

<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/2.-HHC.pdf>

2025 FDNY EMS Projected Expense and Revenue

Projected Expense FY2025 = **\$418,705,539**. *The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2025*, "Expense, Revenue, Contract", Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Jacques Jiha, Ph.D., Director. pp. 79E-83E.
<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/erc4-24.pdf>

"The Department also collects revenue from Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulance transports. In 2025, total EMS revenue is projected at **\$400 million**." Jiha, Jacques, Ph.D. Director, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Eric Adams, Mayor, "The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2025, Message of the Mayor", p. 148.
<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/mm4-24.pdf>

Is the following in addition to the above or altogether in FY2025 ?

According to the Health and Hospitals financial statement for FY 2025, some of the money due to NYC for FDNY EMS work = **\$506,822,000**. The amounts are described as, "The liability for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursements received by the Corporation (HHC) and due to the city for EMS services provided by the City's operations Fire Department (FDNY) on behalf of the Corporation." " New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York, Basic Financial Statements and Supplemental Schedules, June 30, 2025 and 2024 (With Independent Auditors' Report [KPMG] in Accordance with Government Auditing Standards Thereon)", p. 41.
<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/HHC-1.pdf>



EMS WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

10/10/2025

GENDER AND ETHNICITY																
EMS WORKFORCE	MALE							FEMALE							GRAND TOTAL	
RANK	W	B	H	A	N	OTHER	MALE TOTAL	W	B	H	A	N	OTHER	FEMALE TOTAL		
CHIEF OF EMS	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
ASSISTANT CHIEF	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
DEPUTY ASSISTANT CHIEF	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	5	8	
DIVISION CHIEF	9	1	3	1	0	0	14	3	3	1	0	0	0	7	21	
DEPUTY CHIEF	12	4	5	2	0	0	23	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	32	
CAPTAIN	27	7	8	3	0	0	45	14	12	4	1	0	0	31	76	
LIEUTENANT	184	45	93	45	1	8	376	37	36	48	11	0	4	136	512	
SERGEANT	8	3	9	2	0	0	22	4	6	2	0	0	1	13	35	
PARAMEDIC	234	125	221	56	3	36	675	104	57	108	6	0	17	292	967	
EMT	839	469	423	87	15	293	2126	147	242	181	19	5	98	692	2818	
EMS TRAINEE	8	5	2	0	0	47	62	0	4	0	0	0	11	15	77	
TOTAL	1325	660	765	196	19	384	3349	317	365	345	37	5	131	1200	4549	
Percentage %	29.13%	14.51%	16.82%	4.31%	0.42%	8.44%	73.62%	6.97%	8.02%	7.58%	0.81%	0.11%	2.88%	26.38%	100.00%	

Source: NYC Council FDNY Workforce Analyses October 10, 2025. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2025/10/Fire-Department-of-New-York-Uniformed-Personnel-Demographics-Report-1.pdf>

2026 FDNY EMS Projected Expense & Revenue

Projected Expense FY 2026: **\$419,731,455**. Source: dd. p. 80-84E. *The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2026*, "Expense, Revenue, Contract", Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Jacques Jiha, Ph.D., Director. pages 80E-84E. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/exec25/erc5-25.pdf>

Projected Revenue: "The Department also collects revenue from Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulance transports. In 2026, total EMS revenue is projected at **\$400 million**." Jiha, Jacques, Ph.D. Director, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Eric Adams, Mayor, "The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2026, Message of the Mayor", p.157.

A Compendium of Published Statements on the FDNY EMS Staffing and Pay Parity Issues

The relatively small cadre of EMS first responders treat the sick and injured, and aid NYC's bottom line:

3rd party reimbursements received by NYC Health & Hospitals Corporation
for the work of the **FDNY Emergency Medical Services** provided on behalf of HHC
and payable to the City of New York
July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2024
\$1.6 billion dollars

Source: H&HC Financial Statements <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/statements/new-york-city-health-and-hospitals-corporation-hhc/>
Question: Are these solely reimbursements generated by FDNY EMS ambulance transports to the 11 H&HC hospitals?



EMS WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

3/1/2024

GENDER AND ETHNICITY															
EMS WORKFORCE	MALE							FEMALE							
RANK	W	B	H	A	N	OTHER	MALE TOTAL	W	B	H	A	N	OTHER	FEMALE TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL
CHIEF OF EMS	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
ASSISTANT CHIEF	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
DEPUTY ASSISTANT CHIEF	3	0	1	0	0	0	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	4	8
DIVISION CHIEF	9	1	3	1	0	0	14	4	2	1	0	0	0	7	21
DEPUTY CHIEF	15	4	4	2	0	0	25	4	5	1	0	0	0	10	35
CAPTAIN	34	7	9	3	0	0	53	13	8	2	1	0	0	24	77
LIEUTENANT	167	44	78	32	1	5	327	35	33	28	8	0	1	105	432
PARAMEDIC	269	109	219	67	3	30	697	100	63	119	9	0	18	309	1006
EMT	1063	465	529	90	10	251	2408	171	239	212	17	4	79	722	3130
EMS TRAINEE	65	26	11	4	1	34	141	6	1	1	2	0	10	20	161
TOTAL	1627	657	855	199	15	320	3673	336	352	364	37	4	108	1201	4874
Percentage %	33.38%	13.48%	17.54%	4.08%	0.31%	6.57%	75.36%	6.89%	7.22%	7.47%	0.76%	0.08%	2.22%	24.64%	100.00%

Source: <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2024/05/FDNY-Uniformed-Demographics-Annually.pdf>

The above **March 2024** FDNY staffing analysis lists **3,130 EMTs** and **1,006 Paramedics**. EMTs and Paramedics respond to over 1.6 million 911 calls per year in all 5 boroughs, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. A Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance requires 2 EMTs, and an Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance requires 2 Paramedics. EMS dispatch data, including the severity of the medical emergencies and the response times, can be viewed at the NYC Open Data website: https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Public-Safety/EMS-Incident-Dispatch-Data/76xm-jjuj/about_data

EMS' Projected Income and Operating Budget FY2026

► According to "The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2026 Message of the Mayor", the FDNY Emergency Medical Services will generate \$400,000,000 of income for NYC in FY 2026 (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026). Jacques Jiha, Ph.D., Director, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, "Message of the Mayor", Eric Adams, Mayor, May 1, 2025, page 157. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/exec25/mm5-25.pdf>

► \$400,000,000 will cover 95% of the FY2026 FDNY budget for the Emergency Medical Services. (That is different from every other NYC "uniformed" first responder service.) Jacques Jiha, Ph.D., Director Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Eric Adams, Mayor, The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2026, "Expense, Revenue, Contract", pages 80E-84E. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/exec25/erc5-25.pdf>

Causes & Scope of the FDNY Emergency Medical Services Staffing Crisis - -

- Successive NYC Councils Have Called for Pay Parity for the FDNY EMS
- Successive NYC Mayors Have Openly Rejected Pay Parity

The NYC Council Adopted and Then Had to Override Mayor Giuliani's Veto of Local Law 19 of 2001

"The Council finds that employees working for the fire department of the city of New York ("FDNY") as emergency medical technicians ("EMT's"), advanced emergency medical technicians ("paramedics") and the supervisors of EMT's or paramedics have certain terms and conditions of employment similar to those, of the **uniformed services** of the city of New York, including police, **fire, sanitation** and correction services . . . The Council intends by this amendment to the administrative code that **those individuals employed by the FDNY as EMT's, paramedics and supervisors of EMT's or paramedics be accorded the same unique bargaining rights as the uniformed forces of the City.**" NYC Local Law 19 of 2001.

<https://intro.nyc/local-laws/2001-19>

Next, the Giuliani and Bloomberg Administrations fought Local Law 19 in the Courts for Years but Lost

"The Mayor of New York City challenges the validity of two local laws, passed by the City Council over his veto, that give certain fire department employees the status of "uniformed" fire service members for collective bargaining purposes. Like Supreme Court and the Appellate Division, we reject the Mayor's challenge. . . ." Mayor of City of N.Y. v Council of City of N.Y. 2007 June 12, 2007 Court of Appeals. As corrected through Wednesday, September 12, 2007.

<https://law.justia.com/cases/new-york/court-of-appeals/2007/2007-05132.html>

In the 18 years since that Appellate Court decision, 3 FDNY Emergency Medical Services labor contracts have been negotiated, one in 2008 with the Bloomberg administration, and two with the de Blasio administration in 2016 and 2021.

Again In 2020, the NYC Council Made Its Position Clear It Adopted Pay Parity Resolution 1062-2019-A

That "the salaries of New York City emergency medical service personnel to be comparable to New York City's firefighters and police officers". Unanimously adopted on May 28, 2020. Sponsored by Council Members: I. Daneek Miller, Laurie A. Cumbo, **Adrienne E. Adams**, Margaret S. Chin, Helen K. Rosenthal, Joseph C. Borelli, Ydanis A. Rodriguez, **Francisco P. Moya**, Ben Kallos, Peter A. Koo, **Diana I. Ayala**, **Justin Brannan**, **Robert F. Holden**, Alicka Ampy-Samuel, **Brad S. Lander**, Fernando Cabrera, Costa G. Constantinides, Carlos Menchaca, Antonio Reynoso, Farah N. Louis, Andy L. King, Donovan J. Richards, Deborah L. Rose, Robert E. Cornegy, Jr., **Keith Powers**, Carlina Rivera, **Mark Levine**, Vanessa L. Gibson, Paul A. Vallone, Alan N. Maisel, **Public Advocate Jumaane Williams**. <https://nyc.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4146331&GUID=6E165905-EC68-4D4B-9B08-BE4D480E42C2&G=2FD004F1-D85B-4588-A648-0A736C77D6E3&Options=&Search=>

But Mayor Bill de Blasio Didn't Negotiate with the EMS as a "Uniformed" Service

"Just as the FDNY's Emergency Medical Service unions prepare to negotiate a contract, **Mayor de Blasio** put a damper on their efforts to achieve pay parity with police and firefighters by suggesting that the vast gap between top salary for the other jobs and EMS pay existed because their 'work is different.' "

"Mayor de Blasio, asked during an unrelated press conference about the wide gulf in salaries between Emergency Medical Service workers and other first-responders that accounts for a high turnover rate at EMS, replied, 'We are trying to make sure people are treated fairly and paid fairly, but I do think the work is different.'" Hennelly, Bob, "De Blasio Defends Big Gap in Pay Separating EMS from Cops, Fire", *The Chief*, January 28, 2019. <https://thechiefleader.com/stories/de-blasio-defends-big-gap-in-pay-separating-ems-from-cops-fire-free-article,5401>

► EMS Union Local 2507 responded to Mayor de Blasio with a video, "The Work Is Different". It is on the union website at: <https://local2507.com/video/2507.mp4>

In a 2021 City Hall Press Release: "Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Campion Announce Tentative Contract Agreement with EMS Union District Council 37. . . This agreement conforms to **the pattern reached with other civilian unions**. . ." Press Release, Office of the Mayor, "Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Campion Announce Tentative Contract Agreement with EMS Union District Council 37, Raising Wages for Over 4,500 FDNY Employees, Official Website of the City of New York, August 6, 2021. Is that correct? See pp. 17,19 and 20.

"Following negotiations in the summer of 2021, the EMS union stated '**the City categorically refused to provide pay parity or anything that approximated pay parity for EMS First Responders in the FDNY.**'" Edwards, Esq., Tanisha S., Chief Financial Officer, "The New York City Council's Response to the Fiscal 2023 Preliminary Budget and Fiscal 2022 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report", April 1, 2022, p. 13. <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2022/04/Fiscal-2023-Preliminary-Budget-Response-.pdf>

Mayor Adams Took a Different Position - But Hasn't Acted

"Our EMTs, paramedics, and fire inspectors deserve our City's thanks and respect, but for years they have been shamefully denied basic pay equity. As mayor, I will not stand for discrimination against workers, especially not the women and men who have put their lives at risk to save ours day after day . . ." Mayoral Candidate Eric Adams 2020. *New York Post*, June 26, 2023; and, "Finally one of your own is going to understand." video link: <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/on-air/as-seen-on/eric-adams-voices-support-for-emt-workers-who-boycotted-ticker-tape-parade/3143223/>

"So, the goal is to look at all of these inequities and start peeling back these inequities as we finish this term . . . he said." Hennelly, Bob, "NYC Mayor: 'My goal is to 'rectify and correct' FDNY EMS pay inequity." *Work-Bites*. <https://www.work-bites.com/view-all/f5js7i8exdxwbxd8o83e305igfq2n>

". . . but with only a few months to go. . . Adams' administration has not put EMS workers' wages on par with firefighters." Sommerfeldt, Chris, "Mayor Adams Promised Pay Equity for EMTs but New Info Reveals Strong Resistance inside City Hall", *New York Daily News*, September 7, 2025. <https://www.nydailynews.com/2025/09/07/mayor-adams-promised-pay-equity-for-ems-but-new-info-reveals-strong-resistance-inside-city-hall/?share=ywseinsowirnwu2s02v7>

► EMS Union Local 2507 has responded to Mayor Adams with a video. It can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSupTAV9hDA&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Flocal2507.com%2F&source_ve_path=OTY3MTQ

By 2019, the NYC Council Already Knew Low Pay & High Attrition Rates Were Having Negative Consequences

"The **attrition rate is higher** among Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) than firefighters because of a **lower average salary**, when compared to other employers in the healthcare field. EMTs also often leave FDNY for other healthcare careers, and some transition to other jobs within the Department. **This raises concerns around the Department's retention and budgetary strategy for EMS personnel.**"

" . . . the different pay rates for uniformed [firefighters] and EMS may create staffing challenges for the Department. . . A first-year firefighter makes 24 percent more than an EMT . . ."

"EMS' Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Budget totals \$322.1 million, with a headcount of 4,301 [includes the Chiefs, Captains, and Lieutenants] . . . headcount remains unchanged when compared to the Fiscal 2019 Adopted Budget."

"The number of EMS ambulance runs and headcount has steadily increased over the years. **From 2014 to 2018, the average number of EMS ambulance runs was 1.7 million runs.** . . The increase in the trend could be attributed to EMS having to pick up runs that were previously operated by non-FDNY entities.

"The Department generates revenue from EMS ambulance transports. . . The projected revenue for Fiscal 2020 **is \$182.2 million.**" Lee, Jin, Financial Analyst, et al., "The Council of the City of New York Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York", March 7, 2019, pp. 6-15.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2019/03/FDNY1.pdf>

Many, Many PUBLIC OFFICIALS have Gone on Record about the PROBLEMS but NOTHING HAS CHANGED

NYS Attorney General Letitia James

"Equal pay for equal work is a basic human right," said Attorney General James. "Our EMS and EMT workers dedicate their lives to supporting us, and it's past time we give them the support they deserve. I'm proud to stand with them in solidarity in their fight for fairness." "FDNY EMS Rally for Equal Pay", *Queens Gazette*, October, 2, 2019. <https://www.qgazette.com/articles/fdny-ems-rally-for-equal-pay/>

NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli

"FDNY EMS personnel are compensated less than other first responders in the City and other EMS departments nationwide." Office of the New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, *Issue Brief*, February 2, 2022.

<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/reports/osdc/pdf/fdny-issue-brief.pdf>

Stacey Pheffer Amato, New York State Assembly Chair Committee on Governmental Employees

"The long-standing practice of discriminatory pay towards EMS workers is simply unacceptable and must be rectified immediately." "FDNY EMS Rally for Equal Pay", *Queens Gazette*, October, 2, 2019.

<https://www.qgazette.com/articles/fdny-ems-rally-for-equal-pay/>

NYC Council Adrienne Adams & Justin Brannan

"This tremendous wage gap sends a clear message to rank-and-file EMS . . . that they are second-class citizens in the eyes of our city. . . Police officers, firefighters and EMS workers may have different titles and responsibilities, but they are all first responders who risk their lives daily to protect our lives and

"the lives of their fellow first responders. **The case for pay parity is overwhelming.** We need to deliver it and we need to deliver it now." Adrienne Adams and Justin Brannan, "Pay EMTs What They Deserve", *New York Daily News*, February 22, 2020, page 20. <https://www.nydailynews.com/2020/02/22/pay-emts-what-they-deserve-end-the-indefensible-disparities-between-these-and-other-first-responders/>

Corey Johnson, NYC Council Speaker and I. Daneek Miller, Chair of NYC Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor - May 2020

"There can be no further argument against fairly compensating these beleaguered but endlessly brave first responders. The time is now to show our gratitude for their service, commitment to excellence, and the value they add daily to our city by **giving them the equal pay and benefits** they rightly deserve." Johnson, Corey and Miller, I. Daneek, "Enough Talk, Time to Give FDNY EMS Their Due," *Gotham Gazette*, May 27, 2020.

<https://www.gothamgazette.com/130-opinion/9436-enough-talk-give-fdny-ems-their-due-coronavirus-benefits>

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and Council Member Justin Brannan - April 2021

"There's no other way to say it: The way New York City treats our EMS workers is shameful, if not borderline discriminatory. . . While the goal was that workers from both agencies would eventually reach pay parity, the disparity in pay has only grown, more than tripling . . . **The best way to achieve pay parity for EMS workers is to give them their own independent agency**, where they are not an afterthought, but the main show.

"**Part of responsible governance is acknowledging when something we try simply does not work . . .** We've seen enough over the last 25 years to know that the original goals behind merging FDNY and EMS did not materialize. **It's time to undo the merger, and give EMS workers the representation, funding, and professionalism they deserve.**" Adams, Eric and Brannan, Justin, "New York City Needs to Treat EMS Workers So Much Better", *am/NY*, April 21, 2021.

<https://www.amny.com/oped/op-ed-new-york-city-needs-to-treat-ems-workers-so-much-better/>

NYC Council Member Francisco Moya - EMS Predominantly Women & Minorities

"It's time to end this appalling pay disparity. EMTs shoulder the greatest burden of 911 calls. They handled 1.3 million of the 1.8 million calls, or 71% of all emergency calls, in 2018. They accomplished that with less than half the number of EMTs than the FDNY has firefighters – 4,000 medical technicians to 11,000 firefighters. They may

not look the same — FDNY is majority white and male, while EMS is predominantly made up of women and minorities — but they're alike in one critical way: They are heroes. Countless New Yorkers are alive today because of the lifesaving decisions EMTs made when they arrived on the scene. Every day we ask EMTs to save lives while barely paying them enough to live themselves," said Councilman Francisco Moya. "FDNY EMS Rally for Equal Pay", *Queens Gazette*, October, 2, 2019. <https://www.qgazette.com/articles/fdny-ems-rally-for-equal-pay/>

NYC Council Member Robert Holden

"We must do right by our EMS so they can continue to do the work that they do for nearly nine million New Yorkers and millions more who visit our city each year." "FDNY EMS Rally for Equal Pay", *Queens Gazette*, October, 2, 2019. <https://www.qgazette.com/articles/fdny-ems-rally-for-equal-pay/>

FDNY Commissioner (1996-2001) Von Essen - Gap between EMS & Firefighter Pay

"It's time to pay up. . . You have to want to do it." "Paramedic Pay: 7 On Your Side Investigates Salaries, Benefits of NYC's First Responders" Dan Krauth, January 29, 2021. See video interview - <https://abc7ny.com/ems-new-york-city-fdny-emts-7-on-your-side/10132108/> "Nobody worked harder during the pandemic . . . They gained more respect than ever. But I don't see anybody really making an effort to close the gap between firefighters and EMTs." [Former] FDNY Commissioner Von Essen. *New York Daily News*, March 16, 2021.

<https://www.nydailynews.com/2021/03/16/an-unlikely-marriage-that-lived-25-years-later-fdny-and-ems-still-together-after-testy-merger/>

"Nobody did anything for those guys. These guys have been getting screwed around for years. **It's so wrong. It's disgusting**," said Von Essen — who oversaw the transfer of the EMS service from the public hospital system, Health + Hospitals, to the FDNY." Campanile, Carl "Life-Saving NYC Medics Treated Like Zeroes with Low Pay: ex-FDNY Boss Says", *New York Post*, October 15, 2023.

<https://nypost.com/2023/10/15/life-saving-nyc-medics-treated-like-zeroes-with-low-pay-ex-fdny-boss-von-essen-says/>

FDNY Commissioner (2014-2022) Daniel Nigro

"FDNY Commissioner Daniel Nigro voiced support Tuesday for boosting wages for emergency medical services staff to bring them in line with other first responders . . ." Shant Shahrigian, *New York Daily News*, March 3, 2020, as posted at: <https://www.ems1.com/labor-issues/articles/fdny-commissioner-voices-support-for-raising-ems-provider-pay-eMqjzMbfpOwmYBGD/>

FDNY Commissioner Laura Kavanaugh

". . . FDNY Commissioner Laura Kavanaugh said she agreed that the current gap in pay and benefits was outdated . . ." Lewis, Caroline, *Gothamist*, September 23, 2022. <https://gothamist.com/news/new-york-city-struggles-staff-paramedics-emt-emergency-call-response-times-grow-longer>

Chief of EMS (2019-2023) Lillian Bonsignore - Firefighter Exam and Low Pay

"Those who leave EMS do not do so without a good reason. While there are many factors that could lead a member to depart, I'd like to discuss two of the biggest. **One factor that contributes to attrition among our members is the firefighter promotional exam**, which enables age-eligible EMS members, to take a civil service test and be appointed as firefighters. This exam is uniquely available to EMS members, and the two most recent tests - Exam 2500 and Exam 7501 - **resulted in approximately 1400 members of EMS being appointed as firefighters between the beginning of 2013 and the end of 2019.**

"While we don't have specific feedback from every member who resigned, we know that **another key factor in members departing is pay.**" NYC Council Fire and Emergency Management Committee Hearing, Oversight: EMS Attrition. Hearing Testimony, January 28, 2020.

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4288305&GUID=3B51F7AA-A446-45D4-94B9-12A3EF630F68&Options=&Search=>

"Bonsignore said she . . . hopes her successor continues the push . . . [to] decrease the sizable pay gap between EMS and other first responders so EMTs and paramedics are able to support themselves and not work multiple jobs. . . **we're not just a group of ambulance drivers. We're highly trained medical professionals that can bring emergency room training to your bedside.**" Thomas Tracy "First Woman NYC EMS Chief to Retire after 3-Decade Career; 'No One Told Me We Would Have a Worldwide Pandemic', *New York Daily News*, Dec 07, 2022.

<https://www.nydailynews.com/2022/12/07/first-woman-nyc-ems-chief-to-retire-after-3-decade-career-no-one-told-me-we-would-have-a-worldwide-pandemic/>

Some EMS Revenue for NYC - Health and Hospitals (HHC) Financial Statement - FY 2019

Net Amounts due to the City at June 30, the balance of third-party reimbursements received by HHC and for FDNY Emergency Medical Services provided on behalf of HHC -

2019: **\$187,713,000 ✓**

2018: **\$192,692,000**

Source: Grant Thornton, Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants, "New York City Health and Hospital Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements, June 30, 2019 and 2018, October 16, 2019, p. 48.

<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/statements/new-york-city-health-and-hospitals-corporation-hhc/>

► **QUESTION:** What were the sources, and the amounts, of other FDNY EMS revenue in FY2019?

September 2019 EMS Staffing - Pre-Pandemic The New York City Council FDNY EMS Workforce Analysis



EMS WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

MONTH ENDING: September 30, 2019

GENDER AND ETHNICITY															
EMS WORKFORCE	MALE							FEMALE							GRAND TOTAL
RANK	W	B	H	A	N	OTHER	MALE TOTAL	W	B	H	A	N	OTHER	FEMALE TOTAL	
CHIEF of EMS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
ASSISTANT CHIEF	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
DEPUTY ASSISTANT CHIEF	2	0	2	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
DIVISION CHIEF	8	2	0	0	0	0	10	4	0	1	0	0	0	5	15
DEPUTY CHIEF	15	3	4	0	0	0	22	4	2	0	0	0	0	6	28
CAPTAIN	34	7	14	7	0	0	62	9	5	5	0	0	0	19	81
LIEUTENANT	200	55	83	25	0	1	364	58	40	24	6	0	0	128	492
PARAMEDIC	260	102	168	60	3	21	614	77	56	86	13	0	9	241	855
EMT	835	379	547	90	5	95	1951	198	233	257	16	1	51	756	2707
EMS TRAINEE	76	15	30	6	0	6	133	7	24	12	2	0	1	46	179
TOTAL	1430	563	849	188	8	123	3161	359	360	386	37	1	61	1204	4365
Percentage %	45.24%	17.81%	26.86%	5.95%	0.25%	3.89%	72.42%	29.82%	29.90%	32.06%	3.07%	0.08%	5.07%	27.58%	100.00%

Source: <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2020/10/Fire-Department-of-New-York-EMS-and-Uniformed-Personnel-Demographics-Report.pdf>

The above September 30, 2019 workforce analysis listed 3,562 FDNY EMTs and non-officer Paramedics, **2,707 EMTs and 855 Paramedics**. Basic Life Support ambulances are staffed with 2 EMTs and Advance Life Support ambulances are staffed with 2 paramedics. EMS covers the 5 boroughs, 365 days a year, 7 days a week, and 24 hours a day.

FDNY Emergency Medical Services EMT and Paramedics Local 2507 - Unfair Benefits

Testimony before the NYC Council - January 2020 (Before the Pandemic Declaration)

"Our members risk their lives every day just like our brothers and sisters of the fire side, many who are here today to show support. We should be paid and recognized as the first responders we are. By way of example, three days ago the Mayor issued an advisory that laid out the city's preparedness for the deadly coronavirus that has spread to 16 countries including the United States. He boasted we have the best emergency response team in the nation, guess whose members are going to be on the frontlines of this life threatening fight providing the medical support, expertise and skill to protect over eight million New Yorkers from this deadly attack, it's these EMTs and paramedics that are facing life threats each and every day. . . **Not only are they underpaid but they are only given 12 paid sick days per year unlike their colleagues on the fire side of the same department that have unlimited sick pay.**" Oren Barzilay, President Local 2507 of District Council 37 representing the uniformed EMTs, paramedics and fire inspectors. NYC Council Committee on Fire and Emergency Management, Oversight - EMS Attrition, January 28, 2020. Hearing Transcript.

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4288305&GUID=3B51F7AA-A446-45D4-94B9-12A3EF630F68&Options=&Search=>

FDNY Emergency Medical Services Officers' Union Local 3621 Testimony before the NYC Council - January 2020 (Before the Pandemic Declaration) - Retention and Salary

"**For the past two decades** we have been coming here explaining the trials and tribulations of New York City's EMS system, the common thread in all those meetings have been **retention and salary**. For two decades we have told you the adverse impact on the citizens of New York this causes. In the last four years alone, as of 2019, a full 68 percent of our workforce has left for other jobs. . . the practice of medicine is one that only gets better with experience, what the Mayor and city has done is create a civil service version of hunger games with EMS workers as the tribute. **The average current EMS worker has four years or less of experience, we are street doctors, and nobody here would go to a hospital if we were told them that every doctor in there has less than four years' experience.** As recent events such as the coronavirus has shown us it will be EMS on the frontline treating and containing it, we are the canaries of the medical system. . . we know our sacrifice will help protect and save those lives of the people of this great city." Anthony Almojero, Vice President Local 3621 EMS Officers' Union. NYC Council Committee on Fire and Emergency Management, Oversight - EMS Attrition, January 28, 2020. Hearing Transcript.

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4288305&GUID=3B51F7AA-A446-45D4-94B9-12A3EF630F68&Options=&Search=>

The New York City Council - March 2020 - Attrition Alert

"Recognizing that EMS staff are the **lowest paid first responders in NYC**, the Council in its Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Budget Response, called for an increase in EMS staff pay rates. FDNY's Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics earn less than their counterparts in many other U.S cities do.

Furthermore, **FDNY EMS salaries are significantly lower than firefighter salaries**. . . The difference in a firefighter salary and those of EMTs and paramedics grows to 68 and 31 percent respectively after five years.

"The different pay rates for uniformed (firefighters) and EMS create staffing challenges for the Department as many EMS workers apply . . . to become a firefighter. According to the Department, **the Fiscal 2019 attrition rate for EMS was 13.2 percent**, which is 8.6 percentage points higher than the Fiscal 2019 firefighter attrition rate of 4.6 percent. The attrition rate is higher among EMTs than firefighters because of a lower average salary, when compared to other employers in the healthcare field."

"EMS' Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Budget totals **\$346.3 million**, with a headcount of 4,593 positions. . . EMS has seen an increase in workload since Fiscal 2016. . . **EMS continues to spend over the budgeted amount of overtime due to increased workload, staffing challenges, . . .**"

"FDNY's annual EMS budget of approximately **\$345 million** is partially funded by revenue from ambulance transports."

"For Fiscal 2020, the FDNY is projecting \$227.8 million from all sources. Of the total **EMS actual revenue in Fiscal 2019, 44 percent came from commercial, 27 percent from Medicaid, 11 percent from Medicare, and approximately five percent from self-paying individuals.**" Kern, Jack, Financial Analyst, et al., "The Council of the City of New York Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2020 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York", March 3, 2020, pp. 6-19.
<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2020/02/057-FDNY.pdf>.

More EMS Revenue for NYC - Health and Hospitals (HHC) Financial Statement - FY 2020

Net Amounts due to the City at June 30, the balance of third-party reimbursements received by HHC and due to NYC for FDNY Emergency Medical Services provided on behalf of HHC:

2020: **\$375,742,000 ✓**

2019: **\$187,713,000**

Source: Grant Thornton, Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants, "New York City Health and Hospital Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements June 30, 2020 and 2019, October 15, 2020, p. 48.
<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/statements/new-york-city-health-and-hospitals-corporation-hhc/>

► **QUESTION:** What were the sources, and the amounts, of other FDNY EMS revenue in FY2020?

The New York City Council - March 2021 - Lack of EMS Pay Equity

"Using figures provided by the Fire Department, the average Emergency Medical Technician makes \$32,000 less than the average firefighter, and paramedics make \$14,000 less compared to firefighters. When fringe benefits, including pensions, are factored in the average EMT earns \$134,000 less and the average paramedic makes \$108,000 less." Kern, Jack, Financial Analyst, et. al., "New York City Council Report of the Finance Division on the Fiscal 2022 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2021 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, Fire Department City of New York, March 19, 2021, p. 15.
<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2021/03/FDNY-.pdf>

The New York City Council - May 2021 - FDNY EMS - Lowest Paid First Responders

"FDNY's emergency medical technicians and paramedics are among the lowest paid first responders in New York City. The Council called on the administration to increase the salaries to be comparable to other first responders by performing an analysis to determine the cost of phasing in a wage increase. There are approximately 4,300 FDNY EMS members, of whom approximately 59 percent are nonwhite. **FDNY's EMTs and paramedics earn significantly less than other emergency responders in New York City** and other EMS services around the country. A starting EMT in San Francisco earns \$74,000 in the first year, compared to \$35,254 for an FDNY EMT. After five years, the base salary in New York is only \$50,604 for EMTs, \$65,226 for paramedics, in comparison to \$85,292 for firefighters. The gap continues into supervisor ranks, and the average salary is \$102,253 for a Uniformed FDNY lieutenant and \$70,139 for an FDNY EMS lieutenant." McKinney, Latonia R., Director, et al., Finance Division, "New York City Council Finance Division Note on the fiscal 2022 Executive Budget for the Fire

The New York City Council - August 2021 - Bargaining Hasn't Helped

"... Firefighters and EMS workers belong to different unions yet work in the same agency, resulting in vastly different compensation. EMS workers (predominantly women and Hispanic or Latino, and Black or African American) have attempted bargaining for higher pay but have not been successful, while the FDNY has not faced the same issues " New York City Council Data Operations Unit, "Pay Equity in NYC, Analysis of Pay differences in the New York City Municipal Workforce", August, 2021, p. 63.

http://council.nyc.gov/data/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2021/08/080221.OC03.PAY-EQUITY-IN-NYC_v8.pdf

More EMS Revenue for NYC - Health and Hospitals (HHC) Financial Statement FY 2021

Net Amounts due to the City at June 30, the balance of third-party reimbursements received by HHC and due to NYC for FDNY Emergency Medical Services provided on behalf of HHC:

2021: **\$345,911,000 ✓**

2020: **\$375,742,000**

Source: Source: Grant Thornton, Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants, "New York City Health and Hospital Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements June 30, 2021 and 2020, October 20, 2021, p. 49.

<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/statements/new-york-city-health-and-hospitals-corporation-hhc/>

► **QUESTION:** What were the sources, and the amounts, of other FDNY EMS revenue in FY2021?

The New York City Council - March 2022 - Another Attrition Warning

"FDNY's Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics earn less than their counterparts in New York. The starting salary for an EMT at the Department is \$39,386. It is \$53,891 for a paramedic. A first- year firefighter earns \$43,904, 11 percent more than an EMT. . . **The different pay rates for uniformed and EMS create staffing challenges for the Department as many EMS workers apply for a promotion to become a firefighter.**

"According to the Department, the Fiscal 2019 attrition rate for EMS was 13.2 percent, which is 8.6 percentage points higher than the Fiscal 2019 firefighter attrition rate of 4.6 percent. The attrition rate is higher among EMTs than firefighters because of a lower average salary, when compared to other employers in the healthcare field. The attrition rate for EMS was 5.4 percent and 6.7 percent in Fiscal 2020 and 2021 respectively, while it was 4.6 and 4.1 percent for Firefighters in the same years . . . **This raises concerns around the Department's retention and budgetary strategy for EMS personnel.**"

Kern, Jack, Financial Analyst, "New York City Council Report on the Fiscal 2023 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2022 Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York City", March 9, 2022, pp. 6, 9-10.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2022/03/FDNY.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3vnKebyClgsX6tlwJ5s86wUF66ZD9LYAS4PLnkRFQlbInhJG6TIXYNy14>

The New York City Council - April 2022 - Council Wants EMS Pay Parity

"The Council calls on the Administration to take the necessary steps to achieve EMS pay parity. . . it is important to recognize that **pay parity for our Emergency Medical Services workers is still a priority to the Council**; EMS salaries must be competitive with other first responders so that these frontline worker positions can be retained."

"**EMS members are the lowest paid first responders in New York City**, and the Council has consistently advocated for wage equity. We urge the Administration to raise EMS salaries to be competitive with other first responders. Prior to his election, Mayor Adams stated that EMS personnel required parity. The Council requests that the Administration include wage parity in future contract discussions with EMS members. . . The approximately 4,600 members of EMS, including EMTs and paramedics, earn much less than other emergency

responders in New York City and other EMS services across the country. Following negotiations in the summer of 2021, the EMS union stated 'the City categorically refused to provide pay parity or anything that approximated pay parity for EMS First Responders in the FDNY.' " Edwards, Esq., Tanisha S., Chief Financial Officer, "The New York City Council's Response to the Fiscal 2023 Preliminary Budget and Fiscal 2022 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report", April 1, 2022, pp. 2, 11, 13.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2022/04/Fiscal-2023-Preliminary-Budget-Response-.pdf>

More EMS Revenue for NYC - Health and Hospitals (HHC) Financial Statement FY 2022

Net Amounts due to the City at June 30, the balance of third-party reimbursements received by HHC and due to NYC for FDNY Emergency Medical Services provided on behalf of HHC:

2022: **\$184,894,000 ✓**

2021: **\$345,911,000**

Source: Source: Grant Thornton, Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants, "New York City Health and Hospital Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements June 30, 2022 and 2021, October 24, 2022, p. 50. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/statements/new-york-city-health-and-hospitals-corporation-hhc/>

► **QUESTION:** What were the sources, and the amounts, of other FDNY EMS revenue in FY2022?

FDNY Emergency Medical Services Staffing - October 2022



EMS WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

As of today: 10/03/2022

GENDER AND ETHNICITY															
EMS WORKFORCE	MALE							FEMALE							
RANK	W	B	H	A	N	OTHER	MALE TOTAL	W	B	H	A	N	OTHER	FEMALE TOTAL	GRAND TOTAL
CHIEF of EMS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
ASSISTANT CHIEF	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
DEPUTY ASSISTANT CHIEF	4	1	1	0	0	0	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	8
DIVISION CHIEF	11	1	2	0	0	0	14	5	2	1	0	0	0	8	22
DEPUTY CHIEF	14	3	6	3	0	0	26	4	5	1	0	0	0	10	36
CAPTAIN	34	6	10	4	0	0	54	15	8	7	1	0	0	31	85
LIEUTENANT	177	50	87	31	1	3	349	40	34	28	7	0	1	110	459
PARAMEDIC	252	97	179	58	2	25	613	86	58	108	11	0	12	275	888
EMT	1030	437	575	85	10	163	2300	188	242	240	14	0	55	739	3039
EMS TRAINEE	2	3	2	0	0	0	7	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	10
TOTAL	1525	598	863	181	13	191	3371	340	352	386	33	0	68	1179	4550
Percentage %	33.52%	13.14%	18.97%	3.98%	0.29%	4.20%	74.09%	7.47%	7.74%	8.48%	0.73%	0.00%	1.49%	25.91%	100.00%

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2023/01/FDNY-EMS-DEMOGRAPHICS-OCT-2022.pdf>

The October 3, 2022 work force analysis above listed 3,957 FDNY EMTs and non-officer Paramedics, **3039 EMTs** and **888 Paramedics**. Basic Life Support ambulances are staffed with 2 EMTs and Advance Life Support ambulances are staffed with 2 paramedics. EMS covers the 5 boroughs, 365 days a year, 7 days a week, and 24 hours a day.

The New York City Council - March 2023 - EMS Response Times Increasing

"Civilian EMS make up the next largest portion of the (Fire) Department, with more than 4,300 positions, comprising 25 percent of the Department's headcount.

"The FDNY has nine performance indicators that present response time trends. . . **The most notable increase is end-to-end combined average response time to life-threatening medical emergencies by ambulances, which increased from seven minutes and twenty seconds in the first four months of Fiscal 2022, to seven minutes and fifty-five seconds in the same period in Fiscal 2023.**"

"EMS has historically been more diverse than the Department at large. In Fiscal 2022, the EMS was comprised of 74 percent male and 26 percent female. In Fiscal 2021, the EMS headcount skewed slightly more female, with a headcount made up of 73.63 percent male and 26.37 percent female." Singh, Tanveer, Financial Analyst, "New York City Council Report on the Fiscal 2024 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2023 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York", March 13, 2023, pp. 5-10.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2023/03/FDNY-.pdf>

The New York City Council - April 2023 - No EMS Pay Parity - a Problem for Public Safety

"Another common reason provided for high vacancy rates in particular positions, something that predates the pandemic, is the low pay provided to employees in certain titles. . . **This is an issue of particular concern for the emergency medical service (EMS) workers at the Fire Department. . . Without additional pay parity, service provision will continue to erode, in some cases endangering public safety.**" Lee, Richard, Director Finance Division, et al., "New York City Council's Response to the Fiscal 2024 Preliminary Budget and Fiscal 2023 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, April 3, 2023, p. 19.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2023/04/Fiscal-2024-Preliminary-Budget-Response-Final-1.pdf>

The New York City Council - May 2023 - EMS Revenue to Exceed Costs?

"Projected revenue to cover the costs of the EMS is \$367 million, which is \$16.4 million more than the Fiscal 2023 budget at adoption."

NOTE - FDNY EMS assumed the operation of 2 basic life support units previously run by Kingsbrook Jewish Hospital. Singh, Tanveer, Financial Analyst, New York City Council, "Report to the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Fire and Emergency Management on the Fiscal 2024 Executive Plan and the Fiscal 2024 Executive Capital Commitment for the Fire Department of New York, May 17, 2023, pp. 2 & 4.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2023/05/FDNY.pdf>

2023 New York State Senate Hearing - High EMS Turnover

"There is no denying that New York is facing large labor shortages . . . especially among FDNY EMS personnel . . . Any EMT or paramedic will tell you that these shortages are the result of decades of pay disparity . . . **Poverty wages and truly difficult, if not horrific, work conditions for members result in EMS losing on average 30% of new hires within 3 years; and 50% in 5 years!** That is a massive attrition

rate. . ." New York State Senate, Standing Committee on Civil Service and Pensions NYC Public Hearing, October 17, 2023, Testimony of Oren Barzilay, President FDNY EMS Local 2507, DC 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO.

<https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/admin/structure/media/manage/filefile/a/2023-10/local-2507.pdf>

FDNY EMS Assumes Coverage of Northwell Health Ambulance Tours - 2023

"Northwell Health, effective Sunday, is reducing coverage in eastern and central Queens, *The Post* has learned. **It cut ambulance tours on Staten Island earlier this year.**

"The cuts include **elimination of advanced life support on night/overnight ambulance tours in Douglaston, Little Neck, Bayside, Forest Hills and Rego Park**, according to a union official briefed on the reduction. . . Barzilay said

FDNY EMS had agreed to cover the tours abandoned by Northwell Health . . . This change is in conjunction with FDNY EMS leadership." FDNY had no immediate comment." Campanile, Carl, "Northwell Health slashes ambulance coverage, raising concerns about NYC emergency response", *New York Post*, September 17, 2023. <https://nypost.com/2023/09/17/northwell-health-slashes-nyc-ambulance-coverage-raising-concerns/>

More EMS Revenue for NYC - Health and Hospitals (HHC) Financial Statement - FY 2023

Net Amounts due to the City at June 30, the balance of third-party reimbursements received by HHC and due to NYC for FDNY Emergency Medical Services provided on behalf of HHC:

2023: \$203,162,000 ✓

2022: \$184,894,000

Source: Grant Thornton, Report of Independent Certified Public Accountants, "New York City Health and Hospital Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements June 30, 2023 and 2022, October 19, 2023, p. 48.

<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/statements/new-york-city-health-and-hospitals-corporation-hhc/>

► **QUESTION:** What were the sources, and the amounts, of other FDNY EMS revenue in FY2023?

The New York City Council - March 2024 - Advocates Wage Equity

"The EMS are consistently the lowest paid first responders in New York City. The Council has long advocated for wage equity for the EMS making their salaries competitive with other first responders.

"Prior to his election, Mayor Adams stated that EMS personnel required parity, this has not yet been accomplished by his Administration." Singh, Tanveer, Financial Analyst, "New York City Council Finance Division Report on the Fiscal 2025 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2024 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Fire Department of New York", March 15, 2024, p. 9.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2024/03/057-FDNY.pdf>

More EMS Revenue for NYC - Health and Hospitals (HHC) Financial Statement - FY 2024

"The liability for Emergency Medical Services ("EMS") operations represents the balance of third-party payor reimbursement received by NYC Health + Hospitals and due to the City for EMS services provided by the City of New York's Fire Department ("FDNY") on behalf of NYC Health + Hospitals.":

June 30, 2024: \$452,145,000. ✓

Source: KPMG, "New York City Health and Hospital Corporation (A Component Unit of the City of New York) Financial Statements June 30, 2024 and 2023. (With Independent Auditors' Report with Government Standards Thereon)", October 22, 2024, p. 40. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/statements/new-york-city-health-and-hospitals-corporation-hhc/>

► **QUESTION:** What were the sources, and the amounts, of other FDNY EMS revenue in FY2024?

The New York City Council Committee on Civil Service and Labor - January 2025 - Inequity

"I will reiterate to you our commitment to getting this right when it comes to our EMS EMT workforce. I recognize the inequity and the unfairness that your workforce has had to contend for years, and I remain committed to continuing to work with you on this issue so more to come and I really appreciate you taking the time to come here and to speak about this discrepancy, this unfair treatment that this workforce that is so important, right? If anyone has been in an ambulance, we understand the importance of this workforce and you all should be compensated as such. . ." Carmen De La Rosa, Chairperson, City Council City of New York, Committee on Civil Service and Labor, Transcript of the Minutes of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor, January 27, 2025, pp. 69-70.

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7091565&GUID=B0A93DA2-6836-40CA-B612-52DBFCA863F1&Options=&Search=>

FDNY Commissioner Robert Tucker - February 2025

"In 2024, the FDNY responded to 1.6 million medical calls. About 50% of calls firefighters are dispatched to are medical calls. The future of the FDNY is in emergency medical services, Commissioner Tucker said."

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/fdny/news/Y20625/fdny-commissioner-robert-s-tucker-delivers-2025-state-the-fdny-stronger-better-trained-and-robust#:text=Tucker delivers 2025 State of the FDNY: 'Stronger, better, to have ready to deploy?>

NYC Council - March 2025 - Response Times Up - Hiring and Retention Issues to Blame

"Average response time to life-threatening medical emergencies by ambulances (FDNY dispatch and travel time only) increased from 8 minutes in the first four months of Fiscal 2024 to **8 minutes and 48 seconds** in the same period of Fiscal 2025, moving further away from **the Department's target of 6 minutes and 55 seconds**. The Department claims **this increased response time is due to issues** regarding **hiring and retention** of emergency medical technicians and paramedics.

"Response times for life-threatening medical emergencies have worsened, moving further from the Department's target. . . Compounding this issue is a staffing shortage, as **many EMS personnel are leaving to take the Firefighter promotion exam**, further reducing the available headcount. The Council has consistently advocated for EMS pay parity to improve recruitment and retention. . . " Singh, Tanveer, Financial Analyst, "Report on the Fiscal 2026 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2026 Preliminary Capital Commitment Plan for the Committee on Fire and Emergency Management", March, 2025, pp. 6-7.

<https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2025/03/New-York-City-Fire-Department-1.pdf>

Joann Ariola, NYC Council Fire and Emergency Management Committee Chair

"We've been crying pay parity for a very long time." New York City Council Committee on Fire and Emergency Management Hearing March 14, 2025.

<https://citymeetings.nyc/meetings/new-york-city-council/2025-03-14-1000-am-committee-on-fire-and-emergency-management/chapter/ems-wages-pay-parity-and-retention-challenges/>

The New York City Council - April 2025

"The Council proposes allocating \$50 million in baseline funding to begin addressing **long-standing pay disparities between Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel and their counterparts in both the firefighting ranks and other major U.S. cities**." (The money didn't materialize.) NYC Council Press Release, April 2, 2025.

<https://council.nyc.gov/press/2025/04/02/2827/>

Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025 - Staff Shortages Necessitate Overtime

The cost of FDNY Emergency Medical Services **overtime** worked (in excess of 40 hours a week) by Emergency Medical Technicians and paramedics was **more than \$63,000,000 in FY2025**.

Source: Brad Lander, New York City Comptroller, CHECKBOOKNYC.

<https://www.checkbooknyc.com/budget/year/126/agency/74/dept/009>

Where the Responsibility Lies - Stacey Pheffer Amato, Chair - NYS Assembly Committee on Governmental Employees - July 2025

"But **the City Council and mayoral administration's failure to address this situation** has caused us to be in a serious staffing crisis. With some of the lowest numbers of first responders in our city's history, along with recruitment levels at an all time low, no wonder the average response time for life-threatening medical emergencies is 12.35 minutes in 2025, alarmingly up from 11.87 minutes in 2024. I call out the City Council and this mayor for this problem. Their actions, or lack of, have made it so you can be an Uber or food delivery worker and earn \$21 an hour, yet our EMS workers earn \$18 an hour. At the very least, can't the City Council take care of both?" Pheffer Amato, Stacey, "Why isn't the City Taking Care of its First Responders?", *The Chief*, July 29, 2025, p. 5.

FDNY Commissioner Robert Tucker - August 2025 - There Aren't Enough EMTs

"People just don't want to be EMTs anymore ... The only people who are coming to us these days. . . to be EMTs, are people who want to start the clock to become firefighters. After four years, they just go over to fire operations. It was invented before me as a back door to get in. It's now the front door. . . **The next 1,500 firefighters in New York City will come from EMS. . . I don't think we have 300 that want to come in.**"

Ortega, Ralph, "Robert Tucker Clocks in One Year as FDNY's 'CEO'", *City & State New York*, August 8, 2025.

<https://www.cityandstateny.com/personality/2025/08/robert-tucker-clocks-one-year-fdnys-ceo/407332/>

The Council Introduced a Bill for a Separate NYC Department of EMS

"This bill would establish a Department of Emergency Medical Services, headed by a Commissioner of Emergency Medical Services. The Department would be vested with the power to perform functions and operations relating to general ambulance services, emergency medical services and other response services necessary to preserve public health, safety and welfare." Bill sponsors: Adrienne E. Adams, Justin L. Brannan, Lincoln Restler, Tiffany Cabán, Sandy Nurse, Lynn C. Schulman, Farah N. Louis, Alexa Avilés, Gale A. Brewer, Shekar Krishnan, Christopher Marte, Amanda Farías, Susan Zhuang, Diana I. Ayala, Chris Banks, Julie Menin, Crystal Hudson, Joann Ariola, Vickie Paladino, Inna

Vernikov. Committee on Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation, New York City Council, Transcript of Minutes, March 7, 2024. <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6565804&GUID=17A9ADDD-2EDD-43A3-A800-F707E2061843>

Eric Adams and Justin Brannan Supported Pay Parity Years Ago

"Given their sacrifice, and how crucial these workers were to our collective survival, you would think they would be among some of the highest-paid civil servants in this city. The reality could not be further from the truth . . . There's no other way to say it: The way New York City treats our EMS workers is shameful, if not borderline discriminatory.

"The best way to achieve pay parity for EMS workers is to give them their own independent agency, where they are not an afterthought, but the main show . . . Part of responsible governance is acknowledging when something we try simply does not work . . . We've seen enough over the last 25 years to know that the original goals behind merging FDNY and EMS did not materialize. It's time to undo the merger, and give EMS workers the representation, funding, and professionalism they deserve." Adams, Eric and Brannan, Justin, "New York City Needs to Treat EMS Workers So Much Better", *am/NY*, April 21, 2021.

<https://www.amny.com/oped/op-ed-new-york-city-needs-to-treat-ems-workers-so-much-better/>

Appendix A

► Despite Local Law 19 and Council Resolution 1062-2019-A, the "uniformed" FDNY Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics are not treated as members of a "uniformed" service in contract negotiations.

► As of 12/28/25, a Sanitation Worker's base pay after 5½ years on the job will be **\$95,316**.

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/collectivebargaining/2021-2026/sanitation-workers-12-28-2022-02-27-2028.pdf>

► Working under an expired contract, an EMT's base pay is stuck at **\$30,000 LESS**.

Sources: EMS Memorandum of Agreement 2021. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/collectivebargaining/ems-moa-2021.pdf>

FDNY EMS Recruitment website: <https://www.joinfdny.com/careers/ems/>



Renee Campion
Commissioner
Steven H. Banks
First Deputy Commissioner
General Counsel

Office of Labor Relations

22 Cortlandt Street, New York, NY 10007
nyc.gov/olr

Claire Levitt
Deputy Commissioner
Health Care Strategy
Georgette Gestely
Director, Employee Benefits Program

May 5, 2020

Mr. Harry Nespoli
President
Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association
Local 831, IBT
23-25 Cliff Street
New York, New York 10038

Dear Mr. Nespoli:

The City reaffirms its commitment to the existing parity relationship between the uniformed forces of Police, Fire, Correction, and Sanitation, which is measured at the basic maximum salary.

Very truly yours,


Renee Campion

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/collectivebargaining/2021-2026/sanitation-workers-12-28-2022-02-27-2028.pdf>

Appendix B

The FY2010-2024 FDNY EMS Salary Increases were Lower When Compared to other New York City "UNIFORMED" Services & Did Not Keep Up with "CIVILIAN" Pattern Salary Increases

	<u>"Uniformed Service"</u> <u>Contract Pattern</u> (United Firefighters Assoc.)	<u>FDNY EMTs & Paramedics</u> <u>Contracts: 2010-2022</u> <u>EMS Locals 2507 & 3621</u>	<u>"Civilian"</u> <u>Contract Pattern</u> DC 37
<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>% salary increase</u>	<u>% salary increase</u>	<u>% salary increase</u>
2010	1% on 8/1/10 _____	0%* as of 6/10/2016 _____	0% ** on 3/3/2010
2011	1% _____	0% _____	1% on 9/30/2011
2012	1% _____	0% _____	1%
2013	1% _____	0% _____	1%
2014	1.5% _____	0% _____	1.5% ** + a \$1,000 bonus
2015	2.5% _____	1.5% _____	2.5%
2016	3% on 12/1/2016 _____	2.5% * + a \$1,000 ratification bonus _____	3.00%
2017	2.25% on 8/1/2017 _____	3% on 3/6/17 & 3.03% on 9/5/17	2.00% on 9/26/2017
2018	2.5% _____	2% on 6/29/2018 _____	2.25% on 9/26/2018
2019	3% on 8/1/2019 _____	2.25% on 6/29/2019 _____	3.00% on 10/26/2019
2020	3.25%	3% on 7/29/2020	0% *** bonus in lieu of
2021	3.25% _____	4% ↓ as per 2021 Contract. _____	3% 5/26/2021
▶ But the 2021 EMS contract re-defined and increased the work week from 37½ hours to 40 hours equivalent to an additional 6.67% hours or 3½ more weeks of work per year starting 9/12/2021.			
2022	3.50%.	contract expired July 28, 2022	3% on 5/26/22
2023	3.50%	contract expired July 28, 2022	3% *** + a \$3,000 bonus
2024	4.00%	contract expired July 28, 2022	3%
2025		contract expired July 28, 2022	3.25% on 5/26/2025

▶ New York City's Local Law 19 of 2001 stipulated: " . . . that those individuals employed by the FDNY as EMT's, paramedics and supervisors of EMT's or paramedics be accorded the same unique bargaining rights as the uniformed forces of the City." Also SEE Appendix A and Appendix C.

▶ The 2021 FDNY EMS contract did not adhere to the spirit of Council Resolution 1062-2019, unanimously passed on May 28, 2020, that called "for the salaries of New York City emergency medical service personnel to be comparable to New York City's firefighters and police officers."

▶ About the 2021 contract, Mayor de Blasio announced, "This agreement conforms to the pattern reached with other civilian unions, and includes productivity enhancements tied to increased work hours . . ." Press Release, Office of the Mayor, "Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Campion Announce Tentative Contract Agreement with EMS Union District Council 37, Raising Wages for Over 4,500 FDNY Employees, Official Website of the City of New York, August 6, 2021. See Appendix C, pages 19 and 20.

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"Mayor de Blasio Announces Tentative Contract Agreement with Emergency Medical Service Workers, Bringing over 97 Percent of Workforce Under Contract", NYC Office of the Mayor, June 15, 2016. <https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/536-16/mayor-de-blasio-tentative-contract-agreement-emergency-medical-service-workers->

"Mayor de Blasio and DC 37 Announce Tentative Contract Agreement, Providing A Fair Wage To 100,000 Employees", NYC Office of the Mayor, June 26, 2018. <https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/327-18/mayor-de-blasio-dc-37-tentative-contract-agreement-providing-fair-wage-100-000#/0>

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<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/collectivebargaining/2017-2020-ufa-moa.pdf>

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<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/collectivebargaining/ems-moa-2021.pdf>

"Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Campion Announce Tentative Contract Agreement with EMS Union District Council 37, Raising Wages for Over 4,500 FDNY Employees", August 6, 2021. See Appendix C.

<https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/552-21/mayor-de-blasio-commissioner-campion-tentative-contract-agreement-ems-union-district>

"Mayor Adams, OLR Commissioner Campion Announce Tentative Contract Agreement with Uniformed Officers Coalition", NYC Office of the Mayor, June 15, 2023. <https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/420-23/mayor-adams-olr-commissioner-campion-tentative-contract-agreement-uniformed-officers#/0>

DC 37 Press Release, "Mayor Adams and DC 37 announce tentative contract agreement, providing fair wage increases and other benefits to nearly 90,000 employees and securing fair deal for NYC taxpayers", February 17, 2023. https://www.dc37.net/news/newsreleases/2023/nr02_17/

Appendix C

► 3 QUESTIONS - (1) In the above contract years, in what ways were EMT's, paramedics and supervisors of EMT's or paramedics accorded the same unique bargaining rights as the uniformed forces of the City? ___ (2) Did the EMS contracts with years of 0% raises and increased work hours "conform" to even the "Civilian" Contract Pattern?

(3) Until August 2021, which of DC 37's other locals had an increase in work hours to 40 per week?



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Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Campion Announce Tentative Contract Agreement with EMS Union District Council 37, Raising Wages for Over 4,500 FDNY Employees

August 6, 2021

Agreement covers titles such as EMT, Paramedic, EMS Lieutenant, and Fire Protection Inspector; FDNY will train all EMS staff to respond to mental health calls

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Labor Relations Commissioner Renee Campion today announced a tentative contract agreement with District Council 37 Locals 2507 and 3621 that will raise wages for over 4,500 FDNY employees, improve recruitment and retention, and allow the City to expand the mental health response pilot program.

"Our emergency service workers are heroes who got New York City through the worst crisis in generations and continue to serve our city every day with honor," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "This agreement increases wages and will allow us to expand our incredible mental health pilot, which has already proven to be an effective way to handle non-violent mental health calls. I thank Commissioner Campion and Henry Garrido for their hard work in coming to this agreement."

“This important agreement is a testament to this Administration’s commitment to treating municipal workers fairly across the bargaining table. We are proud to have reached this agreement with the union that represents our emergency service workers who respond to the needs of City residents each and every day. Thank you to DC 37 Executive Director Henry Garrido and his entire team for working with the City on this contract,” said **Commissioner Renee Campion**.

The agreement covers the period from June 29, 2018 through July 28, 2022, including a six-month contract extension. This agreement conforms to the pattern reached with other civilian unions, and includes productivity enhancements tied to increased work hours and the expansion of mental health responses. Under the agreement, a 6% mental health response differential will be provided to EMS employees who are trained and available to be deployed in the expanded version of the mental-health pilot program that pairs EMS workers with trained mental health professionals in response to non-violent mental health calls.

General wage increases under this agreement are as follows:

6/29/18: 2%
6/29/19: 2.25%
7/29/20: 3%
9/12/21: 4%

Effective on September 12th, employees will also work 2,088 hours per year; the previous contractual work schedule for most unit employees was 1,957 hours per year. Other economic benefits under the agreement are increases to longevity payments, annuity payments, and uniform allowance payments.

The net cost of the agreement by year is as follows:

FY21: \$26.7 million
FY22: \$44.2 million
FY23: \$65 million
FY24: \$73.7 million
FY25: \$79.5 million

The terms of the agreement must be ratified by union membership.

“FDNY EMTs, Paramedics, and Officers are essential to the safety and health of our city,” said **FDNY First Deputy Commissioner Laura Kavanagh**. “Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic they once again bravely demonstrated to the world what we all know to be true - they are the very best and deserve to be compensated for the critical emergency medical care they provide to thousands of New Yorkers each day.”

Media Contact

pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov
(212) 788-2958

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: President Michael Mulgrew

Address: UFT

I represent: UFT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Priscilla Castro

Address: Chair Para Professionals

I represent: UFT

Address: 52 Bway

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Karen Alford

Address: Vice President Elementary

I represent: UFT

Address: UFT

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michelle Herman

Address: Policy Analyst

I represent: UFT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Samath Wilner

Address: Policy Analyst

I represent: UFT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: John Kampis

Address: Para Vice Chair

I represent: UFT

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____
☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anthony Barnes

Address: Para Vice Chair

I represent: UFT

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____
☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christy Angel

Address: D75 President PTA

I represent: D75

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____
☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Trevaugh Taylor

Address: para 50 President PTA

I represent: UFTS

Address: _____

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/15/2021

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name:

Address:

I represent:

Address:

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1269 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10/13/2021

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name:

Address:

I represent:

Address:

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/13/28

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name:

Address:

I represent:

Address:

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0521 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/13/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anthony Almosera

Address: [REDACTED] BKLYN NY 1120

I represent: FDNY EMS Officers Union Local 3621

Address: 125 Grand St

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 407-24 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 11.13.25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SAYWARD MAZUR

Address: [REDACTED] 10023

I represent: SELF + BO OF GOV. 180

Address: [REDACTED] 10023

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 120 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/13/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Veronica Longo

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0521 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11.13.25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: OREN BARZIKAY

Address: [REDACTED] WHITSTONE NY 11357

I represent: FDNY EMS Local 2507

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Connie Altamirano

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**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: 11/13/2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anthony Almojera

Address: 125 Barclay St NY NY 10007

I represent: Vice President, Local 3621

Address: (Captains & Lieutenants EMS)

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 521 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brian Bradford

Address: [REDACTED] New Castle DE 19720

I represent: New Castle County EMS

Address: 3661 N Dupont Highway New Castle DE 19720

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: 11/13/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Buron Abad.

Address: [REDACTED] BK NY

I represent: _____

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition BILL 1261

Date: 11/13/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: EMILY SMITH

Address: [REDACTED] NEW YORK

I represent: PARENT OF A STUDENT AT NY 10007

Address: PS 89 WHOSE IS HELPED BY A PARAPROFESSIONAL

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Intro 1241 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13, 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Randi Weingarten

Address: President APT

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/13/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michelle Hermann

Address: UFT Policy Analyst

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Nov 13 2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Beth Norton

Address: Det Counsel UFT

I represent: UFT

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**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: Paul Miano, Acting Chief of EMS

Address: 9 MetroTech Center

I represent: FDNY

Address: _____

**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: First Deputy Commissioner Guerra

Address: _____

I represent: FDNY

Address: _____

**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: Lizette Cristoff, Deputy Comm. Budget

Address: 9 MetroTech Center

I represent: FDNY

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**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: Commissioner Robert Tucker

Address: _____

I represent: FDNY

Address: _____

**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: Nafesah Noorhan AC Workforce Develop

ment

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. ^{BILL} 1261 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/13/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: EMILY SMITH

Address: [REDACTED] NY, NY, 10007

I represent: A CHILD IN NYC PUBLIC SCHOOL WHO

Address: HAS A PARAPROFESSIONAL

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms