

### Residents Respond to Summonses at OATH Neighborhood Pop-Up Courts

In 2018, OATH, the City's administrative law court, began piloting the innovative Neighborhood Pop-Up Courts program. Pop-Up Courts joins other established programs such as Hearings Online, Video Hearings, Hearings by Phone, and Hearings by Mail, all of which aim to make fighting a summons from a City agency as convenient and time-efficient as possible for New York City residents and small businesses.

Through the initiative, OATH Hearing Officers travel to neighborhoods across the five boroughs to conduct hearings on the ground in communities. They have visited Community Boards, libraries, offices of elected officials and other civic organizations in an effort to increase response rates to City-issued summonses and to make justice at OATH more accessible. Increasing response rates is important because summonses that are not responded to in a timely manner can result in negative consequences, like higher penalties. OATH is focusing on areas that are far from OATH Hearing Offices or in transportation deserts where modes of transportation are limited. Additionally, because immigrants may feel more comfortable going to their Council Member's office or civic organization to respond to a summons than to a City building, OATH sends out letters in Spanish and focuses on places where immigrants are more likely to live.



**Respondents arrived early on the morning of May 23rd for the second Pop-Up Court in the Bronx. Respondents are thanked for coming, asked how their experience was, and are given OATH drawstring bags after their hearings.**

Holding a Neighborhood Pop-Up Court involves a mail marketing outreach campaign that targets recipients of summonses issued by the Department of Sanitation and certain summonses issued by the Health Department that have upcoming hearing dates and that have not already been paid. Because these types of cases do not require the issuing agency or inspector to be present at the hearing, respondents are able to meet one-on-one with the OATH Hearing Officer and say why they believe the summons should be dismissed. The letters sent out inform summons recipients that there is an upcoming Pop-up Court in their neighborhood and that their summons is eligible to be responded to remotely (online, video, mail or phone hearings), by attending the scheduled hearing at the OATH Hearings Division office listed on the summons, or by attending the Pop-Up Court in their neighborhood. After attending a Pop-Up Court hearing, the decision is mailed within 10 days to both the summons-issuing agency and the person who received the summons.

OATH has held 5 Neighborhood Pop-up Courts: 1 in Harlem, 2 in the Bronx ([NY1 News Coverage](#)), 1 in Brooklyn ([Patch News](#)), and 1 on Staten Island ([Staten Island Advance](#)) with overwhelmingly positive reviews from those who have used them.

## Be #FDNYSmart with Fire Hydrant Spray Caps



As summer brings rising temperatures, if you plan to use a fire hydrant to beat the heat, make sure you're #FDNYSmart!

Your local firehouse can install a temporary spray cap on your nearest fire hydrant, free of charge. A spray cap makes the hydrant flow like a sprinkler, reducing the amount of flowing water. Illegally opened fire hydrants waste water and can endanger lives.

Improperly opened hydrants can reduce

local water pressure and waste 1,000 gallons of water per minute. Using a spray cap reduces the amount of water from 1,000 gallons to 25 gallons per minute, which will keep children safe from the force of the spray and make sure that there is enough water pressure for fire-fighting throughout the city.

Adults 18 and over, with valid ID, can visit their [local firehouse](#) to request a spray cap. The firehouse will install the cap for you, reducing the water output to a safe level and creating a sprinkler effect to give everyone relief from the heat.

“On hot summer days, it’s tempting to open a fire hydrant for heat relief, but this can negatively impact water pressure-which is critical for fire operations-by hindering the efforts of Firefighters, and endangering the lives of New Yorkers and first responders,” said Fire Commissioner Daniel A. Nigro. “Visit your local firehouse to request a spray cap to be installed on your local hydrant to keep cool responsibly.”

Remember to never park your car in front of a fire hydrant! It can delay Firefighters from getting water on a fire and that puts lives at risk! For more information on open fire hydrants visit the [FDNY Smart](#) website. If you observe a hydrant that is opened improperly, or that your water pressure is low, call 311 or visit their [website](#).

## Honoring NYCHA's Finest



In June NYCHA recognized two exemplary employees with the John DeCarlo Memorial Award, which is presented annually to caretakers who go above and beyond in service to residents. The award was established to honor the legacy of John DeCarlo, a Marlboro Houses caretaker beloved by residents and colleagues who lost his life on duty in 1997.

Surrounded by family, colleagues, and Teamsters Local 237 representatives at the Bronx River Community Center, caretaker Nelson Genao was presented with a check for \$1,000 by Executive Vice

President for Operations Cathy Pennington. In a separate ceremony at her development, runner-up Virginia Gabriel, a caretaker at Glenwood Houses, received a check for \$500. Mr. Genao and Ms. Gabriel were chosen from dozens of nominations, and Ms. Pennington praised their commitment and outstanding work ethic.

Mr. Genao began his NYCHA career as a caretaker at Bronxdale Houses in 1997; and since 2006 has worked at Bronx River Houses, where he's known as a team player who doesn't hesitate to help out whenever needed. Supervisor of Housing Caretakers Leonard Crawley remarked that "he always goes the extra mile when performing his tasks and duties, shows initiative, and takes pride in his work. Residents often compliment him for keeping the grounds so well maintained."

Ms. Gabriel has been a caretaker at NYCHA since 2000, serving several developments throughout Brooklyn. According to her supervisor, Jerry Burk, "Ms. Gabriel is truly very hard working and dedicated, has a great attitude, and always greets residents with a smile."

Stay tuned for information on how you can nominate a caretaker who embodies NYCHA's core values (respect, efficiency, collaboration, safety, and accountability) for next year's awards.

## NYC Emergency Management's Latest 'Know Your Zone' Campaign Empowers New Yorkers to Be Prepared for Hurricanes

To mark the beginning of the 2018 Atlantic hurricane season, the New York City Emergency Management Department launched a new phase of the "Know Your Zone" hurricane awareness campaign to encourage New Yorkers to find out whether they live in one of the city's six hurricane evacuation zones.

The 2018 Know Your Zone campaign includes new [video public service announcements \(PSAs\)](#) empowering New Yorkers to prepare for hurricanes by knowing the hazards they may face, having a plan, and staying informed. Through hurricane season (which runs from June 1 through November 30), Know Your Zone advertisements can be found on bus shelters, in newspapers (in multiple languages), and LinkNYC kiosks throughout the five boroughs. In addition, each advertisement

features personal preparedness tips from New York City Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers and NYC Emergency Management staff members who live in hurricane evacuation zones.



Simone Gaaney, Procurement Analyst and M/WBE Coordinator at NYC Emergency Management, lives in a hurricane evacuation zone and is featured in this year's PSAs.

"I was happy to be a part of [this campaign], and I was glad to be able to represent my community," Gaaney said.

Wessley Duskocil, Deputy Director of Field Response at NYC Emergency Management, is also featured in the ads. Duskocil lives in zone 6 on Staten Island. "I think [people] would take away the thought process to be more prepared, especially living in a community that is the 'forgotten' borough," he said.

Through the Know Your Zone campaign, NYC Emergency Management aims to reach the roughly three million New Yorkers living within the city's hurricane evacuation zones. Areas of the city subject to storm surge flooding are divided into six evacuation zones (1 through 6) based on risk of storm surge flooding. The City may order residents to evacuate depending on a hurricane's track and projected storm surge.

NYC Emergency Management generates support for the Know Your Zone campaign through extensive outreach, using partnerships made through CERT, Community Preparedness, Partners in Preparedness, and Ready New York, as well as local elected officials and government partners. Throughout the season, agency staff conduct hurricane preparedness presentations for City employees, as well as civic organizations, summer camps, senior centers, ESL classrooms, and faith-based organizations in communities most vulnerable to hurricane hazards. Agency staff also conduct presentations for non-English speaking communities, seniors, and those with disabilities.

For more information about the Know Your Zone campaign, visit [NYC.gov/knowyourzone](https://nyc.gov/knowyourzone) or call 311.

## **OATH Help Centers Celebrate 1-Year Anniversary**

OATH officially launched Help Centers in all Hearing Division locations in June 2017. Help Centers assist self-represented litigants who appear at OATH for hearings. The Help Centers are staffed with Procedural Justice Coordinators who ensure that self-represented persons experience a fair hearing process and a clear decision-making process. The goal of the Help Centers is to provide unrepresented persons with legal information and other resources so that they can handle their case on their own. While the Help Center can and will provide legal information, the Help Center cannot and does not provide legal advice.

In the Help Center's first year of operation (June 12, 2017 through June 11, 2018), OATH's Procedural Justice Coordinators at Help Centers in all five Hearing Division locations actively assisted 39,404 respondents in person and 544 by e-mail. In total, 39,948 self-represented respondents were assisted, amounting to an average of 154 respondents helped each day.



**OATH Help Center Staff** Top row Left to right: Emily Southwick, Norris Davis, Isaak Kharkover, Ambakisyse Joseph, Jaurez Davis, Kieran P. Holohan, Nazrul Islam, Felix A. Ortiz, Joshua Rivera, Carlos Jimenez, Fana Garrick-Robinson, Mark Franks  
Bottom row Left to right: Alex Kolodka, Alec Nolan, Reginald Brown, Emmanuelasia Vaught, Shada Baker, Samad Newaz, Sandra Cabrera-Pineiro

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