



June 13, 2024

New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

New York City Council Members
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams and New York City Council Members,

Mayor Eric Adams' FY25 Executive Budget is not a financial plan that will increase real health and safety for New Yorkers in the upcoming year. The FY25 Budget includes significant staffing and budget cuts to crucial agencies, services, and infrastructure – cuts that undermine the foundation of safe and thriving cities. At the same time, Mayor Eric Adams continues to expand the staffing and budget of the NYPDⁱ and the FY25 Executive Budget includes \$11.9 billion dollars in police spending.ⁱⁱ In addition, he is also planning to build a \$225 million dollar mega-police training facility. **The 60 organizations sending this letter are calling on you to ensure that the budget reflects real safety priorities of New Yorkers.** We are especially concerned that increases to the size and scope of the NYPD are being proposed at a time when NYPD overspending, misconduct, and secrecy is at an all-time high. We can't continue to reward the NYPD by expanding police spending while gutting key NYC programs that create the ecosystem of non-police safety infrastructure for our communities. Some of our top concerns about NYPD's behavior in the last few years include:

- **NYPD overspending.** The NYPD's Expense budget was \$800 million over budget in FY23 and the NYPD is predicted to overspend again by at least that amount by the end of FY24, this includes \$961 million in overtime spending.ⁱⁱⁱ This level of overspending is representative of NYPD preferential treatment in the budget process which comes, at the cost of other agencies.
- **The NYPD's press, public relations, and social media presence has dramatically increased.** The NYPD's Deputy Commissioner of Public Information (DCPI) department has more than doubled in the last two years, with a current staff of 86 and over 250 social media accounts,^{iv} the NYPD has used this department as a propaganda machine that has waged mis-information campaigns on the How Many Stops Act and other public policies^v, released propaganda videos that mis-represent police interactions with civilians^{vi}, and facilitated NYPD's top brasses social media attacks on judges, council members^{vii} and advocates^{viii}. We estimate that the NYPD DCPI public relations spin team is costing the city over \$10 million dollars. When accounting for full cost of staffing and contracts outside of DCPI, including managing NYPD's 250 social media accounts, we estimate that the full cost of NYPD press and communications is well over \$10 million dollars.^{ix}.
- **The NYPD is conducting the most unconstitutional and racially biased stop-and-frisk since 2015^x and police killings are at an all-time high in ten years^{xi}.** The gains that were made towards unconstitutional stop-and-frisk practices have been rolled back under this administration with increases in unconstitutional stop-and-frisk as well and increases in police killings of civilians.

- **NYPD continues to refuse to discipline officers for misconduct and abuse.** The NYPD continues to refuse to discipline officers who have been charged with abuse and misconduct and discipline was recommended by the Civilian Complaint Review Board, the NYPD’s oversight body, perpetuating a harmful, entrenched culture and structure of NYPD impunity. The NYPD’s recent decision not to discipline or fire the cops who killed Kawaski Trawick^{xii}, is another example of this refusal to hold officers accountable for harm and violence.
- **NYPD increasingly used to criminalize mental health and homelessness.** Instead of making needed investments in NYC’s housing crisis, Mayor Eric Adams has dramatically increased NYPD sweeps of homeless encampments^{xiii}, aggressively attacked homeless migrants, and pushed homeless New Yorkers into the criminal justice system. Similarly, Adams has increased the scope of NYPD involvement in mental health crisis through NYPD Mental Health involuntary removals^{xiv} and more NYPD officers on mental health “co-response teams”.
- **Police misconduct complaints have risen by 51%^{xv}.** In the past two years, official complaints about NYPD misconduct, abuse, and violence have soared, indicating that New Yorkers are experiencing more and more harm at the hands of police officers.
- **Continued lack of transparency on NYPD misconduct, harm, and abuse.** It was recently reported that \$1.2 billion dollars in NYPD litigation settlements went unreported^{xvi}, covering up the real cost of NYPD’s refusal to fire abusive officers. In addition, the NYPD is legally required to provide the public information on NYPD Officer misconduct and abuse, however, it was recently reported that the NYPD’s public database on officer misconduct is deeply flawed, with cases of officer misconduct disappearing for weeks^{xvii}, making it virtually impossible to accurately assess the level and scope of officer misconduct.

We cannot continue to write a blank check to the country’s largest police department that is escalating harm and violence towards New Yorkers and refusing to be held accountable for its actions. Especially at a time when serious cuts in the FY25 city budget will have significant impacts on New Yorker’s, such as library weekend hours being eliminated, fewer school counselors, nurses, and mental health professionals in schools, fewer programs for people leaving the criminal justice system, and New Yorkers who will have even less access to affordable housing and mental health programs – *just to name a few of the cuts that that are in the Mayor’s FY25 Executive Budget*. A safe NYC requires deep and sustained investments in creating strong, healthy and safe communities, not cutting and stagnating important programs and community infrastructure while letting the NYPD expand its budget year after year.

We are requesting that the following changes be incorporated into the FY25 Adopted Budget so that New Yorkers can have access to the services and support they need and the NYPD is held accountable for their record of violence, misinformation, overspending, and their refusal to fire officers who unjustly kill, brutalize, and violate the rights of New Yorkers. The following areas should be cuts in the NYPD budget and this money should be made available to close gaps in other critical agencies, these include:

1. **Cut the NYPD’s press/communications budget by at least 50%**, including Deputy Commissioner of Public Information and other NYPD press/communications infrastructure and programs. Public resources should not be used to spread misinformation, and the millions of dollars being spent by the NYPD public relations spin team should be cut and re-invested to close critical gaps. When accounting for full cost of staffing of DCPI, social media management and other contracts, we estimate that the full cost of NYPD press and communications is well over \$10 million dollars.^{xviii}
2. **Remove NYPD from mental health “co-response teams.** New Yorkers need mental health care, not increased criminalization. NYPD Co-Response Teams should be eliminated, and this money

should be moved into crisis response teams that do not include police officers and community-based mental health services and programs that can provide mental health crisis prevention, response and post-crisis services. We estimate that the NYPD Uniform costs of NYPD Mental Health Co-Response teams is approximately \$5.6 million dollars.^{xix}

- 3. Freeze hiring of school police and cut funding for remaining vacant school positions.** Mayor Eric Adams is proposing hiring 574 school police officers next year in the FY25 Executive Budget.^{xx} It was also recently announced that an additional 400 school police positions^{xxi} are being proposed for the FY25 Adopted budget, meaning close to 1000 new school police officers in schools next year. The city should be taking the opposite approach, cutting school cop vacancies, freezing hiring, and moving at least \$96 million^{xxii} to close needed gaps in services and support for students. Students need restorative justice, mental health, other non-police schools' staff and practices that help students learn and thrive, not cops.
- 4. Disband the Strategic Response Group (SRG)** Adams is proposing an increase in funding next year for this notoriously abusive unit^{xxiii}. The SRG should be disbanded, and their hyper-aggressive escalating tactics should be eliminated. Militarized forces that target protesters for exercising their first amendment rights do not belong in our communities or in our streets, we must disband the SRG and reinvest \$145 million^{xxiv} to serve, not harm New Yorkers.
- 5. Block attempts to add 1,200 additional officers in FY25^{xxv},** and instead invest those monies to fund help keep jobs in schools, mental health programs, libraries, composting, and non-police anti-violence programs. The NYPD should not be allowed to add an additional 1,200 new recruits in FY25 while staffing from other critical agencies and programs are being cut. These officers would add \$62 million dollars to the NYPD expense budget and at least an additional \$62^{xxvi} million in fringe and pension costs for FY2 for a total of \$124 million that can be reinvested.
- 6. Stop Creation of Cop City** Reject Mayor Eric Adams plan to spend \$225 million^{xxvii} on a mega-police training facility in Queens. This capital project will bring together the enforcement arms of 18 different city agencies^{xxviii}, increasing the influence and power of the NYPD and molding the enforcement arms of other city agencies so that they more closely follow NYPD protocols and practices. This is a dangerous expansion of policing and enforcement and will result in increased criminalization of New Yorkers.

Our budget, as a moral document, should reflect the priority of investing in communities first - not cutting and stagnating important programs and community infrastructure while letting the NYPD expand its budget year after year.

Signed,

Communities United for Police Reform
Allan Feliz Foundation
Alliance for Quality Education
Anthony Baez Memorial Fund
Arab American Association of New York
Audre Lorde Project
CAA AV Organizing Asian Communities
Campaign Zero
Center for Anti-Violence Education
Center for Community Alternatives
Center for Constitutional Rights

Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar Evers College, at The City University of New York
Center for NuLeadership on Human Justice and Healing
Churches United for Fair Housing
Citizen Action of New York
College Access: Research & Action
Community Connections for Youth
Community Voices Heard
Dignity in Schools Campaign-NY
Drug Police Alliance
DRUM - Desis Rising Up & Moving
El Puente
Equality for Flatbush
Faith in New York
Families for Freedom
Freedom Agenda
Girls for Gender Equity
Housing Works
Innocence Project
Jews for Racial and Economic Justice
Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club
Justice and Beyond
Justice Committee
Kairos Center for Rights, Religions, and Human Rights at Union Theological Seminary
LatinoJustice PRLDEF
Legal Action Center
Legal Aid Society
Literacy Assistance Center
Make the Road New York
Malcolm X Grassroots Movement
MomsRising
New Economy Project
New Kings Democrats
New York Civil Liberties Union
New York Communities for Change
New York Immigration Coalition
North Star Fund
Policing and Social Justice Project
Public Science Project
Safety Net Project - Urban Justice Center
Street Vendor Project at the Urban Justice Center
SURJ-NYC
Surveillance Technology Oversight Project
Teachers Unite
The Gathering for Justice
Theatre of the Oppressed NYC
Transgender Law Center
Urban Youth Collaborative
VOCAL-NY
Working Families Party
Youth Represent

CC:

Mayor Eric Adams

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams

Comptroller Brad Lander

ⁱ New York City Police Department Fringe and Benefit Costs are higher in FY25 than in all previous years based on The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2025. *Expense Revenue Contract Budget*. Mayor's Office of Management and Budget. p.71E. Retrieved May 7, 2024, from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/erc4-24.pdf>. In addition, staffing expansion of the NYPD through the addition of 400 new school safety officers, see_DCAS approval of 400 new School Safety Officer positions, Retrieved on May 14th from here:

<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dcas/downloads/pdf/public-hearings/nypd-056-draft-resolution.pdf>

ⁱⁱ The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2025. *Expense Revenue Contract Budget*. Mayor's Office of Management and Budget. p.71E. Retrieved May 7, 2024, from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/erc4-24.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Sommerfeldt, C. (2023, April 24). *Mayor Adam's budget plan restores NYPD funding, keeps \$58M cut to NYC libraries*. Daily News. Retrieved May 7, 2024, from <https://www.nydailynews.com/2024/04/24/mayor-adams-latest-executive-budget-nyc-libraries-nypd-migrant-crisis/>

^{iv} NYPD testimony given at the New York City Council Committee on Finance Meeting - Jointly with the Committee on Public Safety, May 9th, 2024. Retrieved May 9th, 2024, from

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=1194773&GUID=563CEF43-F5F2-45A8-BFD2-B3EF426A6E76&Options=infoI&Search=>

^v NYPD Chief of Transit on Good Day New York Program on Fox News talking about the How Many Stops Act <https://x.com/NYPDTransit/status/1750189496669213145>

^{vi} NYPD Deputy Commissioner, Operations Kaz Daughtry, @NYPDDaughtry, <https://x.com/NYPDDaughtry/status/1785772195416809763>

^{vii} Prater, N. (2024, April 3). *Eric Adams, NYPD brass flip out over a column criticizing them over crime*. Intelligencer. Retrieved May 10, 2024, from <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/nypd-brass-attacks-columnist-over-subway-crime-story.html>

^{viii} Gonen, Y. & Hogan, G. (2024, April 8). *NYPD officials orchestrated smear campaign of police critic using confidential details other rape, lawsuit alleges*. The City. Retrieved May 10, 2024, from <https://www.thecity.nyc/2024/04/08/nypd-dana-rachlin-jeffrey-maddrey-brooklyn-john-chell-police-reform/>

^{ix} NYPD testimony given at the New York City Council Committee on Finance Meeting – Jointly with the Committee on Public Safety, May 11th, 2022. NYPD Testified to a 36 person Deputy Commissioner for Public Information Staffing with a budget of \$3.3 million, given staffing has increased to 86 (see endnote above) and [recent reporting on the composition and salaries of DCPI employee's](#), we estimate that the total cost of DCPI is closer to \$10 million dollars. Public Testimony retrieved on May 9th 2024 from

<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=958720&GUID=52EDD258-60EF-40C9-ADE4-E2498433C838&Search=>

^x New York Civil Liberties Union, Stop and Frisk Data, Retrieved on May 9th from: <https://www.nyclu.org/data/stop-and-frisk-data>

^{xi} Gonen, Y. (2023, December 21). *NYPD Cops Fatally Shot 13 People In 2022, the Highest Number In a Decade*. The City. Retrieved May 7, 2024, from <https://www.thecity.nyc/2023/12/21/nypd-shootings-force-report/>

^{xii} Gonen, Y. (2024, April 14). *No discipline for officers who killed Kawaski Trawick*. The City. Retrieved May 10, 2024, from <https://www.thecity.nyc/2024/04/14/no-discipline-nypd-officers-kawaski-trawick/>

^{xiii} Yi, K. (2024, April 8). *Mayor Adams' homeless encampment sweeps reached new high last fall*. Gothamist. Retrieved May 10, 2024, from <https://gothamist.com/news/mayor-adams-homeless-encampment-sweeps-reached-new-high-last-fall>

^{xiv} Fitzsimmons, E.G., and Newman, A. (2022, Nov. 9th) *New York City to Involuntarily Remove Mentally Ill People From Streets*. New York Times Retrieve on May 9th from <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/29/nyregion/nyc-mentally-ill-involuntary-custody.html>

^{xv} Parascandola, R. (2024, January 11). *NYPD misconduct complaints up 51% in 2023; police say more arrests, increased enforcement caused spike*. Daily News. Retrieved May 7, 2024, from <https://www.nydailynews.com/2024/01/11/nypd-misconduct-complaints-up-51-in-2023-police-say-more-arrests-increased-enforcement-caused-spike/>

^{xvi} Price, K.G. (2024, April 12). *How \$1.2 billion in NYPD civil litigation case settlements and monetary awards went unreported*. City and State New York. Retrieved May 10, 2024, from

<https://www.cityandstateny.com/policy/2024/04/how-12-billion-nypd-civil-litigation-case-settlements-and-monetary-awards-went-unreported/395714/>

^{xvii} Hernandez, S. (2024, May 9) *Looking Up an NYPD Officer's Discipline Record? Many Are There One Day, Gone the Next*. ProPublica. Retrieved on May 10th from <https://www.propublica.org/article/nypd-police-discipline-records-database-accountability-misconduct>

^{xviii} NYPD testimony given at the New York City Council Committee on Finance Meeting – Jointly with the Committee on Public Safety, May 11th, 2022. NYPD Testified to a 36 person Deputy Commissioner for Public Information Staffing with a budget of \$3.3 million, given staffing has increased to 86 (see endnote above) we estimate costs are closer to \$8 million dollars and likely more. Retrieved on May 9th 2024 from <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=958720&GUID=52EDD258-60EF-40C9-ADE4-E2498433C838&Search=>

^{xix} NYPD Co-Response team calculations based on headcount of 27 Uniform Officers and budget \$2.8 million in salaries in the expense budget in spring of 2023, according to the NYC Comptroller's office. When including costs of fringe and benefits, estimate total is \$5.6 million.

^{xx} Calculations based on the gap between authorized headcount for School Safety offices, 4,126 (p.709) and full-time active positions 3,552 (p. 712) New York City Executive Budget Fiscal Year 25, *Supporting Schedules*. Mayor's Office of Management and Budget. Retrieved on May 9th from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/ss4-24.pdf>

^{xxi} NYPD testimony given at the New York City Council Committee on Finance Meeting - Jointly with the Committee on Public Safety, May 9th, 2024. Retrieved May 9th, 2024, from <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=1194773&GUID=563CEF43-F5F2-45A8-BFD2-B3EF426A6E76&Options=info|&Search=> . Also see DCAS approval of 400 new School Safety Officer positions, Retrieved on May 14th from here: <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/dcas/downloads/pdf/public-hearings/nypd-056-draft-resolution.pdf>

^{xxii} Cost savings of \$48 million for cutting SSA vacancies based on estimation of average yearly cost of School Safety Agents. The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2025. (2024). *Supporting Schedules*. p.509, 712. Retrieved May 10, 2024, from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/ss4-24.pdf> . \$50 million for hiring freeze is based on attrition rate of School Safety Officers per month as testified to by Tracy Mulet, Inspector at School Safety Division, New York City Council Public Safety Preliminary Budget Hearing, March 20th, 2024. Retrieved on May 9th from: <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6548600&GUID=8B7D4613-C0E4-48A5-B80D-5EB43F32352B&Options=&Search=>

^{xxiii} New York City Executive Budget Fiscal Year 25, *Supporting Schedules*. Mayor's Office of Management and Budget. p 676. Retrieved on May 9th from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/ss4-24.pdf>

^{xxiv} Full costs of SRG reflect Salaries in the NYPD Expense Budget as well as Fringe and Benefit Costs in Centrally Allocated Funds. New York City Executive Budget Fiscal Year 25, *Supporting Schedules*. Mayor's Office of Management and Budget. p 676. Retrieved on May 9th from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/ss4-24.pdf> and The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2025. *Expense Revenue Contract Budget*. Mayor's Office of Management and Budget. p.71E. Retrieved May 7, 2024, from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/erc4-24.pdf>

^{xxv} Del Valle. V (2024, April 20th) *1,200 new recruits to join NYPD as Mayor Adams announces more funding*. Gothamist. Retrieved on May 9th from <https://gothamist.com/news/1200-new-recruits-to-join-nypd-as-mayor-adams-announces-more-funding>

^{xxvi} Fringe and Pension Costs for NYPD calculated \$6.1 Billion dollars in NYPD Fringe and Pension costs in FY 25 Executive Budget. The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2025. *Expense Revenue Contract Budget*. Mayor's Office of Management and Budget. p.71E. Retrieved May 20th, 2024, from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/erc4-24.pdf>

^{xxvii} Mayor Eric Adams Press Release, May 31st, 2024 <https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/431-24/mayor-adams-hosts-first-ever-new-york-city-public-safety-promotion-ceremony-new-unified>

^{xxviii} According to Mayor Erica Adams Press Release above, 17 city agencies other than the NYPD have enforcement arms, here are is a list of 15 of those agencies: New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Police; New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) Police; New York City Department of Correction (DOC); New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Police; New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Police; New York City Department of Homeless Services Police; New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) Enforcement Patrol; New York City Department of Probation (DOP); New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM); Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY); NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H) Police; New York City Human Resources Administration Police; NYPD; New York City Sheriff's Office; and New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) Police.