



# DIGNITY, COMMUNITY, AND POWER:

**2024 NEW YORK CITY BUDGET  
AND POLICY PLATFORM**



# INTRODUCTION

As the largest community-based membership organization representing immigrants and working-class people of color in New York State, Make the Road New York (MRNY) is uniquely positioned to identify and address pressing community needs. In New York City (NYC), where the largest concentration of our 27,000 members reside, we operate community centers in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. We employ a multi-faceted approach to supporting immigrants, communities of color, and working-class New Yorkers, providing a full range of legal, educational, and survival services.

Our communities need bold action to reverse inequities and expand opportunities for all New Yorkers. However, essential programs and services are under attack from a mayor determined to scapegoat our new neighbors and fear-monger in an attempt to justify draconian cuts. We envision a different New York—one that prioritizes dignity, equity, and justice.

(Note: ➤ indicates budget-focused items.)

# ENSURE ALL NEW YORKERS HAVE A RIGHT TO A ROOF

## EXTEND CITYFHEPS TO SHELTER RESIDENTS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS

A record number of people are experiencing homelessness, and shelter stays are inordinately long. CityFHEPS, a voucher that helps New Yorkers move from homeless shelters to apartments, is limited to a very small number of people. To help more people obtain stable housing, the City must improve CityFHEPS by eliminating unnecessary rules and expanding eligibility to more households, including families where everyone is undocumented.

## ENSURE ALL NEW YORKERS HAVE SAFE AND HEALTHY HOUSING

A chaotic enforcement system and lack of interagency coordination means too many landlords still neglect repair needs and get away with harassment. Black and Latinx New Yorkers are more than twice as likely to report deferred maintenance in their homes, yet NYC's enforcement regime fails to collect civil penalties when landlords refuse to make repairs. The City must ensure that landlords are held accountable by increasing penalties and collecting them. (Visit our full list of affordable housing recommendations at [righttoaroom.org](http://righttoaroom.org))



# PROTECT IMMIGRANT NEW YORKERS AGAINST DEPORTATION

## ➤ INVEST AN ADDITIONAL \$150M IN FUNDING FOR IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES

Legal service providers work around the clock to assist NYC's newest migrants, often with little to no additional funding, while maintaining representation of thousands of existing clients. The City must substantially increase funding for immigration legal representation to better protect immigrant communities now and in the future.

## ➤ PROVIDE AT LEAST \$1M IN FUNDING FOR THE RAPID RESPONSE LEGAL COLLABORATIVE (RRLC)

The RRLC provides access to counsel to community members who are detained and on the verge of being deported or who have orders of removal and are at risk of ICE detention. The RRLC also monitors ICE activity and trends and works with organizers to provide real-time information to community members. The City must designate at least \$1M to fund this program for the long term and prevent any cuts to this program as proposed by Mayor Adams.

## ➤ MAINTAIN AT LEAST \$16.6M IN FUNDING FOR THE NEW YORK IMMIGRANT FAMILY UNITY PROJECT (NYIFUP)

NYIFUP providers ensure that vulnerable immigrants who are detained by ICE have access to expert counsel. The City must continue to invest in this critical service.

## REFORM CIVIL IMMIGRATION DETAINER LAWS

The City must pass Intros 214, 395, and 396 to prevent conspiring or collusion between ICE and local law enforcement.

- Intro 214 grants individuals the right to take legal action against the City if they are wrongfully detained by the New York Police Department (NYPD), the Department of Corrections (DOC), or the Department of Probation (DOP).
- Intro 395 prevents the NYPD from holding individuals past their release date without a warrant signed by a judge.
- Intro 396 ensures that DOC does not disclose information about the individuals in their custody to federal immigration authorities.

# INVEST IN EDUCATION EQUITY

## INVEST IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Save key public education and youth programs on the chopping block due to \$1B in expiring federal funds or millions in city cuts. Prior cuts should be reversed and funding should be restored.

## FUND STUDENT SUCCESS CENTERS

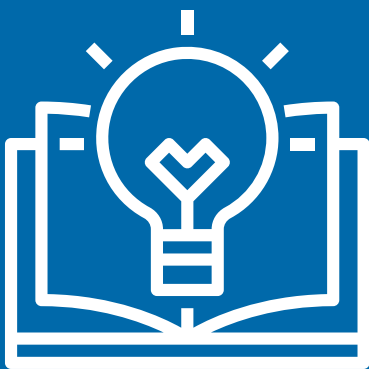
The City must restore the \$3.3M of expiring federal stimulus funds to support Student Success Centers (SSCs) and create a path for sustainable funding for SSCs for the years to come. The SSC model, grounded in youth leadership and peer-to-peer programming, supports first gen, immigrant, and working class students of color in creating strong post secondary plans for college and careers.

## ➤ FUND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Commit \$77M in funding to community schools bracing for significant budget cuts so they can continue to provide critical social services services to students and their families. While community schools have a proven track record of boosting graduation rates, attendance, and on-time grade progression, budget cuts are threatening these services at a time when they are needed most.

## ➤ FULLY FUND ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS

There are 2.2 million adults in NYC with limited English proficiency or without a high school diploma. The City needs to invest between \$29.7 million and \$43.2 million for Adult Literacy at a rate of \$2700 per student. As part of this investment plan, the city should include at a minimum the \$21,720,000 for the Department of Youth and Community Development Adult Literacy that appears in the mayor's preliminary budget for FY25. These funds should be used to increase the per student funding rate, increase the number of Neighborhood Tabulation Areas (NTAs) designated for funding, and fund providers outside of the NTAs who wish to run borough-wide and/or city-wide programs.



# REIN IN THE NYPD AND FUND REAL SAFETY

➤ The NYPD's budget continues to rise at astronomical rates, even while the Adams administration continues to make cuts to vital programs that create real safety in our communities. It is essential to reduce the size, scope, and budget of the NYPD, and redirect those resources to non-police community-based safety solutions. The City must stop rewarding NYPD violence, misinformation, and refusal to fire abusive police in the budget process. This includes:

- Disband the Vice Enforcement Division and the Strategic Response Group (SRG), remove NYPD from mental health co-response teams, block any increase in headcount and instead invest these resources to fund real community safety infrastructure (e.g. housing, schools, non-police mental health responses and anti-violence programs).
- Reduce the NYPD's outsized press and communications budgets by at least 50% (including, but not limited to DCPI) to reduce their capacity for misinformation campaigns, including directly after they kill New Yorkers and in other police violence cases
- The NYPD must be held accountable to budgets and annual spending like other agencies, and the City must stop the NYPD from overspending its budget every year by hundreds of millions of dollars without any meaningful consequences.

## ➤ POLICE-FREE SCHOOLS

The City should completely dismantle school policing infrastructure, culture, and practices in NYC schools and devote those funds to supporting youth. The more than \$400M spent on the NYPD's School Policing division should be redirected to fund the resources, staff and restorative practices that support every young person to learn and grow. The city must immediately:

- Freeze hiring of school police that does not allow to fill for attrition;
- Eliminate funding for the 492 vacant school police positions;
- Eliminate the 200M+ "enhanced security measures", including new metal detectors and surveillance;
- Disband the Youth Coordination Officers (\$106.2M); and
- Reinvest this funding to protect and expand restorative justice, mental health, social workers, counselors and other non-police school staff and practices that help students learn and thrive.

# STRENGTHEN WORKER PROTECTIONS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND ENFORCEMENT

## **PASS THE SECURE JOBS ACT INTRO 837 AND EXTEND JUST CAUSE PROTECTIONS TO ALL WORKERS**

The City must pass the Secure Jobs Act and extend protections from being fired without “just cause” to all workers in low-wage industries and invest in enforcing this critical protection. Under the current “at-will” employment scheme, employers enjoy free rein to fire a worker for any reason or no reason at all. With few safeguards from arbitrary dismissal, workers are hesitant to speak up about workplace violations.

## **➤ RENEW AND EXPAND THE LOW-WAGE WORKER SUPPORT (LWWS) INITIATIVE TO \$3M, INCLUDING \$1.4M FOR THE CITY-WIDE IMMIGRANT LEGAL EMPOWERMENT COLLABORATIVE (CILEC) COALITION OF LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOS)**

The LWWS initiative enables legal service providers and CBOs to represent hundreds of workers on wage theft, discrimination, and other claims. Groups also conduct comprehensive, multilingual worker outreach and education programs.

## **➤ FULLY FUND THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION (DCWP) AT \$2.2M AND THE LAW ENFORCEMENT BUREAU OF THE NEW YORK CITY COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (NYCCHR) AT \$6.7M**

Worker protection agencies need the staff and resources to meaningfully enforce basic protections, especially for the most vulnerable workers. As violations and claims rise, staffing cuts have hindered DCWP’s ability to effectively enforce critical municipal laws such as protections for third-party food delivery service workers, the right to paid sick leave, scheduling and “just cause” protections for fast food workers. Cuts to NYCCHR’s Law Enforcement Bureau have led to discrimination and harassment cases languishing for several years before they are adjudicated, with discriminatory employers benefitting from delays. The City must increase capacity at the Law Enforcement Bureau to pre-pandemic levels to meet the increased volume of claims filed and include funding for the implementation of the Fair Chance Act. Hiring restrictions at DCWP and NYCCHR must be lifted.

## **➤ RENEW FUNDING FOR THE JOB TRAINING AND PLACEMENT INITIATIVE**

This program supports classes for members of unions, CBOs, and providers serving immigrants. Funding must include \$5.25M for the Consortium for Worker Education “Jobs to Build On” program and \$2.5M for Worker Service Centers.

# EXPAND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

## ➤ INVEST IN ADDRESSING HEALTHCARE DISPARITIES

The City must expand funding for the Access Health Initiative to \$4M and allocate \$2.3M in funding for the Managed Care Consumer Assistance Program (MCCAP). Additionally, the City must maintain funding for Ending the Epidemic at \$7.7M and the Immigrant Health Initiative at \$2M. These programs enable CBOs to provide immigrant families with information about their rights and available health resources.

## ➤ MAINTAIN FUNDING AT \$9.75M FOR NYC BENEFITS PROGRAM

This program connects hundreds of thousands of eligible New Yorkers to government benefits that are currently underutilized. NYC Benefits brings together city agencies and CBOs to help individuals enroll in public benefit programs for which they are eligible. This initiative was designed with a three-year term (We are currently in year 2 of the program).

## ➤ EXPAND FUNDING FOR THE NYC CARE PROGRAM

Operated by NYC Health + Hospitals, NYC Care guarantees low-cost and no-cost services to New Yorkers who do not qualify for, or cannot afford, health insurance. NYC Care must receive \$100M per year to continue to implement the program and fund CBOs to conduct outreach, education and direct enrollment. They should also receive additional funding to be able to expand the program to Federally Qualified Health Centers, which was approved under Local Law 107.

## ➤ CREATE, FUND AND SUSTAIN A COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER PROJECT

NYC should create this program to fund CBOs to hire Community Health Workers (CHWs). These CHWs would partner closely with clinical facilities, and provide 1-1 assistance helping individuals navigate the health system and access care.

