



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CHIEF POLICY ADVISOR TO THE MAYOR JOHN FEINBLATT AND  
FINANCE COMMISSIONER DAVID M. FRANKEL ANNOUNCE AGREEMENT  
GRANTING NEW YORK CITY ACCESS TO FINANCIAL CRIMES  
ENFORCMENT DATABASE**

*Database Will Help City Investigate Money Laundering and Criminal Tax Evasion*

*Department of Finance First and Only Municipal Tax Agency with Direct Access*

Chief Advisor to the Mayor John Feinblatt and Finance Commissioner David M. Frankel today announced a groundbreaking agreement to grant the City's Department of Finance direct access to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, or FinCEN, database. FinCEN, a division of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, serves as the Financial Intelligence Unit for the federal government. The Department of Finance is the first municipal tax agency in the nation to be granted direct access to the nationwide network of financial intelligence and analysis for criminal tax evasion investigations.

The FinCEN database is a vast central data warehouse for financial intelligence. Hundreds of thousands of banks, securities firms, insurance companies, check cashers, casinos and other financial institutions are required to report certain transactions that are very useful in financial investigations to the FinCEN database. Because of the agreement announced today, the Department of Finance will now have direct access to that useful information.

The raw information, as well as analysis that FinCEN also provides, will help the Department of Finance investigate crimes including money laundering and criminal tax evasion. The Department of Finance's Office of Tax Enforcement is responsible for investigating criminal tax evasion relating to all New York City taxes.

"When people and businesses don't pay their fair share it means two things for the rest of us who play by the rules," said Finance Commissioner Frankel. "Either the cost of providing services goes up, or the City provides fewer services. Access to FinCEN gives us another important investigatory tool to aggressively pursue those who shirk the law and cheat the rest of us."

Access to FinCEN could not have been accomplished without the Mayor's Financial Crime Task Force, which brokered the agreement between Finance and FinCEN.

"Data is the bedrock of good law enforcement, and this agreement will give the City Finance Department access to a trove of timely and relevant financial information to help them build their investigations," said John Feinblatt, the Mayor's Chief Policy Advisor. "I am glad the Mayor's Financial Crime Task Force, led by Michael Flowers, could help broker this agreement and help the Finance Department find every dollar that is owed to the taxpayers."

The City of New York is one of the largest taxing jurisdictions in the nation.

Commissioner Frankel also reminded businesses and individuals that the City has a Voluntary Disclosure Program that waives penalties and criminal prosecution for delinquent taxpayers who agree to pay their debt voluntarily and pay their taxes going forward. The Voluntary Disclosure Program gives businesses and individuals a chance to come clean and enter the tax rolls before they get caught.

"It is only a matter of time before we get you," said Commissioner Frankel. "It is far better that you come in now, before we find you."

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