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**ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL BOARD TO OPEN NEW OFFICE FOR
BROOKLYN CASES ON DECEMBER 19, 2011**

*The Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings' Environmental Control Board Will
Open Brand New Facility in Brooklyn to Better Accommodate New Yorkers who Choose
to Contest Tickets In-Person.*

Starting Monday, December 19, 2011 hearings for Notices of Violations that are scheduled to take place at the Environmental Control Board (ECB) Brooklyn office will take place at its new location, 9 Bond Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, New York, 11201. This new location is replacing the ECB Brooklyn office located at 233 Schermerhorn Street.

The Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings' (OATH) goal is to provide access to fair and timely hearings to anyone who wants to contest a ticket. Last year under OATH's management, the Environmental Control Board made it possible for recipients of most types of tickets to contest them online or by having their hearing with a judge over the phone. Both of these options make it more convenient for business and property owners to respond to various types of violations since tickets can be contested without coming to the tribunal in person.

"OATH is transforming its tribunals into truly user-friendly courts. We want to provide anyone that wants the opportunity to participate in the administrative justice process to feel as though they can do so in the most convenient and comfortable way possible" said OATH's Commissioner and Chief Judge, Suzanne Beddoe. "The new hearing facility will increase the Brooklyn office's efficiency and will provide more comfort to New Yorkers who contest their tickets in-person".

Some people will feel most confident defending their case in-person and there are complicated or serious types of charges that are filed with the Environmental Control Board that require that the recipient respond in person. The new Brooklyn ECB office has state-of-the-art systems, more hearing rooms, and a larger waiting room to better accommodate those New Yorkers who choose to contest their tickets in front of an ECB judge.

The Environmental Control Board (ECB) is one of the largest tribunals in the country. It handles approximately 700,000 Notices of Violation each year, which it receives from 12 different City agencies, such as the Department of Sanitation, the Buildings Department, and the Department of Environmental Protection, among others. OATH took over the management of ECB from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in 2008, under Local Law 35. Under OATH's management, ECB eliminated a backlog of 7,000 cases, shortened the wait time for judicial decisions from 96 days to less than 30, and has made the hearing process easier by providing online hearings and appeals, as well as hearings by phone. In July of this year, OATH took over management of the Health Tribunal from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and the Taxi & Limousine Tribunal from the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC). The OATH Health Tribunal mostly holds hearings on cases involving restaurants and the OATH Taxi & Limousine Tribunal hears cases on TLC's rules regulating their licensed drivers and vehicles.

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