

[CLOSE WINDOW](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PR- 121-07

April 23, 2007

**MAYOR BLOOMBERG, QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY BROWN  
AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMISSIONER JIMENEZ  
CELEBRATE GROUNDBREAKING OF SECOND NEW YORK CITY  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER*****One-Stop Service Center Will Provide Assistance to Queens'  
Diverse Domestic Violence Victims***

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today announced the official start of construction for New York City's second Family Justice Center located in Kew Gardens, Queens. The Center, expected to open in the spring of 2008, will provide comprehensive multilingual services to domestic violence victims and their children. This event also marks the start of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, a tradition that has been observed for 16 years by crime victims and those who serve them. Joining the Mayor at the groundbreaking were Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown, Queens Borough President Helen M. Marshall, Deputy Mayor for Legal Affairs Carol A. Robles-Roman, [Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence](#)

Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez, Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, Mayor's Criminal Justice Coordinator John Feinblatt and Andy Dover, Chief Executive Officer of the Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation.

"The New York City Family Justice Center in Queens represents an innovative approach to providing domestic violence services," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Queens is a borough of diverse communities and this Center will be a place for government and nonprofit service providers to come together and support victims of domestic violence and their children-all under one roof."

"We are not only breaking ground today for a new Family Justice Center here in Queens but we are also taking an important step in breaking the cycle of violence that affects so many families in our community," said Queens District Attorney Brown. "Through our partnership with Mayor Bloomberg and the on-site service providers, I am confident that the Center will only enhance the quality of justice that domestic violence victims have been receiving here in Queens County."

Queens County is the most diverse county in the entire nation with a population of over 2.2 million, 46% of whom are foreign-born. Since 1990, approximately one million new immigrants have come to Queens, infusing the borough with a cultural richness that comprises 161 languages. Last year in Queens there were 45,500 reported incidents of domestic violence - representing 21% of all reported incidents citywide. The New York City Family Justice Center in Queens will keep the needs of immigrant communities at the forefront of the planning process, providing services and support to overcome the barriers that often prevent immigrant victims from coming forward to receive help.

"Our City and nonprofit partners at the Queens Family Justice Center will represent the diverse needs of our clients," said Commissioner Jimenez. "Domestic violence victims can take comfort in knowing that, regardless of their primary language or immigration status, they will be able to receive the immediate assistance they need to gain safety and services for themselves and their children."

Victims will be able to walk into the Family Justice Center in Queens and choose from a variety of services that include:

- Civil legal representation for immigration, housing and Family Court matters
- On-site childcare and children's activities
- Safety planning
- Assistance with filing police and probation reports
- Counseling
- Support groups
- Prosecution of domestic violence crimes
- Services for the elderly and/or disabled
- Access to emergency shelter and housing
- Language interpretation
- Voluntary spiritual support

"The name says it all - the Family Justice Center, it is about family, justice, and a center where victims of domestic violence can come and find the comprehensive services they need - all in one place," said Queens Borough President Marshall. "I am happy to contribute capital funding to support this new facility, conveniently located in Kew Gardens."

Since January of 2002, the City has been developing a more comprehensive and innovative approach to combat domestic violence and hold batterers accountable. Domestic violence 911 calls have been digitized so that they can be produced more quickly as criminal evidence against batterers. Public housing procedures for women who are fleeing their abusers have been streamlined, and there has been a 35% increase in emergency shelter beds available to domestic violence victims. The Language Line Program that was started in Queens is now a citywide initiative that equips police officers with special telephones that allow direct access to interpreters in more than 150 languages. In July 2005, Mayor Bloomberg opened the City's first Family Justice Center in downtown Brooklyn; it has exceeded all expectations and has served over 6,000 clients and averages nearly 1,000 client visits per month. Through these efforts domestic violence crime, which includes murder, rape, and felony assault, has decreased 20% citywide over the last four years and continues to be a declining trend. Help is also available 24-hours-a-day to victims by calling 911, 311, or the New York City Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-621-HOPE (4673).

The \$5 million New York City Family Justice Center in Queens is a private-public partnership supported by a diverse group of foundations and citizens. Supporters include the "Founders' Circle," composed of the Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation, Verizon Wireless, the Avon Foundation, Dr. Joy to the World Foundation, United Way of New York City, Altria Corporate Services, Cisco Systems, Inc., and Dell, Inc. Additional support will be provided through in-kind donations from community partners. The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, the umbrella nonprofit organization for the City, administers the private funding for this program and will once again dedicate funds raised from its annual benefit, Fete de Swifty. For more information on this event, please visit [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov).

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Stu Loeser / Evelyn Erskine (212) 788-2958

Kathleen Rafferty ([Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence](#))  
(212) 788-3156