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This report can be found at the Council’s website at
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Executive Summary

The City is neglecting its responsibilities to comply with the NYC Pro-Voter Law and is disenfranchising more citizens from participating in the electoral process. An investigation by the New York City Council Investigation Division (CID) has found that more than half of the Community Boards and designated City agencies are not complying with Local Law 29 of 2000 (known as the “NYC Pro-Voter Law”),¹ requiring that they make voter registration forms available for distribution to the public.

Specifically, the NYC Pro-Voter Law requires that designated New York City (NYC) agencies and community boards distribute voter registration forms to individuals when they apply for public services, renewals or recertifications for services, or submit a change of address.² Introduced by City Council Speaker Gifford Miller and adopted by the NYC Council in 2000, the NYC Pro-Voter Law was designed to promote voter registration among NYC residents and to supplement New York State Motor Voter Bill, which requires those applying for driver’s licenses be given voter registration forms.³

¹ N.Y.C. Charter, §1057 (a).

² N.Y.C. Charter, §1057 (a) (2).

³ NYCRR, §5-212.

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CID conducted an anonymous investigation to determine the availability of voter registration forms and the level of compliance with the NYC Pro-Voter Law at all community board offices and designated City agencies.

The investigation found the following:

- Fifty-two (53%) of the 99 locations visited by investigators were not complying with the NYC Pro-Voter Law in that they did not have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public.
- Forty-seven (47%) of the 99 locations visited by investigators have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public and were complying with the NYC Pro-Voter Law.
- Of NYC's 59 community boards, 26 (44%) did not have voter registration materials available for distribution to the public.
- Of the 40 designated City agency sites that investigators surveyed, 26 (65%) did not have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public.
- Staff at 21 (40%) sites that did not carry voter registration forms told investigators that their agencies/community boards never previously carried the forms.
- Of all five boroughs, Brooklyn community boards and City agency sites had the highest rate of non-compliance with the NYC Pro-Voter Law as 60% of locations visited did not have voter registration forms available for distribution. Non-compliance rates in the remaining

boroughs were as follows: Bronx (53%), Queens (52%), Manhattan (50%), and Staten Island (25%).

The following are recommendations from CID, which if implemented will help to improve current performance under the Pro-Voter Law and to close loopholes in the current law.

- **New York City agencies should comply with the current NYC Pro-Voter Law.**
- **Pass legislation mandating annual training for city employees in implementing the Pro-Voter Law.**
- **Pass legislation mandating that the Borough Presidents train both paid community board staff and appointed community board members about their obligations to comply with the NYC Pro-Voter Law.**
- **Pass legislation that would require NYC public high schools to distribute a voter registration form with every high school diploma.**
- **Mandate that voter registration forms be attached to all agency forms.**

- **Pass legislation implementing better coding and tracking of agency-based registration forms.**
- **Pass legislation that would require each participating agency to collect voter registration forms and forward them to the Board of Elections. Each agency will be required to name a Voter Registration Officer who would be responsible for the proper implementation of this policy.**
- **City agencies and Community Boards should follow the guidelines of the Voter Assistance Commission to increase voter registration.**
- **Voter registration materials should be made more available at public locations. Pass legislation requiring that the New York City Housing Authority and Human Resources Administration be participating agencies under the Pro-Voter Law.**

Background

As of 2000, there were more than six million people over the age of eighteen living in New York City (NYC).¹ However in 2001, only 3.7 million people were registered to vote.² Of those registered, only 1.5 million people (41% turnout) cast a vote in the 2001 citywide Mayoral election.³ In order to encourage City residents to take part in the electoral process, the New York City Council adopted the Local Law 29 of 2000 (the “NYC Pro-Voter Law”), requiring that designated NYC agencies and Community boards distribute voter registration forms to individuals seeking out public services, renewals or re-certifications for services, and change of address relating to such services.⁴ The NYC Pro-Voter Law, which was sponsored by City Council Speaker Gifford Miller, also was designed to supplement the New York State Motor Voter Bill, which requires that those applying for driver’s licenses receive voter registration forms.⁵

The Voter Assistance Commission (VAC), is a nonpartisan agency created in 1988 to encourage and facilitate voter registration and voter participation. The NYC Pro-Voter Law authorized VAC to create advisory

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. Profiles of General Demographic Characteristics – New York, May 2001.

² Phone conversation with Chris Reilly, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, NYC Board of Elections.

³ Board of Elections website: <http://www.vote.nyc.ny.us/pdf/results/2001/generalelection/general2001.pdf>.

⁴ N.Y.C. Charter, §1057 (a) (2).

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guidelines to help applicable New York City agencies comply with the law.⁶

⁵ NYCRR §5-212.

⁶ N.Y.C. Charter, §1054.

Methodology

CID investigated compliance with the NYC Pro-Voter Law at 99 locations throughout NYC, including all 59 NYC community board offices and 40 City agency locations representing all 19 designated City agencies.

Of the 59 community boards surveyed, 12 were located in the Bronx, 18 in Brooklyn, 12 in Manhattan, 14 in Queens, and three in Staten Island.

CID investigators surveyed 20% of all the offices of City agencies covered under the NYC Pro-Voter Law. Of the 40 City agency sites that were visited, three were located in the Bronx, seven were in Brooklyn, 22 were located in Manhattan, seven were located in Queens, and one was located in Staten Island.

Investigators completed a one-page survey at the end of each visit. During each visit, investigators asked agency staff members about whether voter registration forms were available at each site as well as voter-registration material.

Findings

Following are the results of the CID investigation:

Cumulative Results

The investigation revealed that 47 (47%) of the 99 community boards and City agency locations visited by investigators had voter registration forms available to the public. Fifty-two (53%) of the 99 locations visited by investigators did not have voter registration forms available to the public.

Of the 59 community boards that investigators surveyed, 26 (44%) did not have voter registration forms available to the public. Of the 40 designated City agency locations that investigators surveyed, 26 (65%) did not have voter registration forms available to the public.

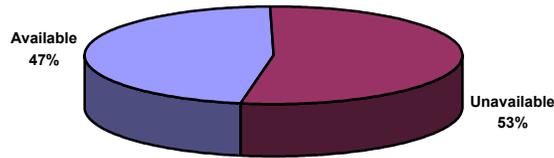
Importantly, 21 (40%) of the 52 community boards and City agency sites that did not carry voter registration forms told investigators that their agencies/Community Boards never previously carried the forms.

When comparing all five boroughs, Community Boards and City agency sites located in Brooklyn had the highest rates of non-compliance with the Pro-Voter Law as sixty percent (60%) of locations did not have voter registration forms available for distribution. Compliance rates in the

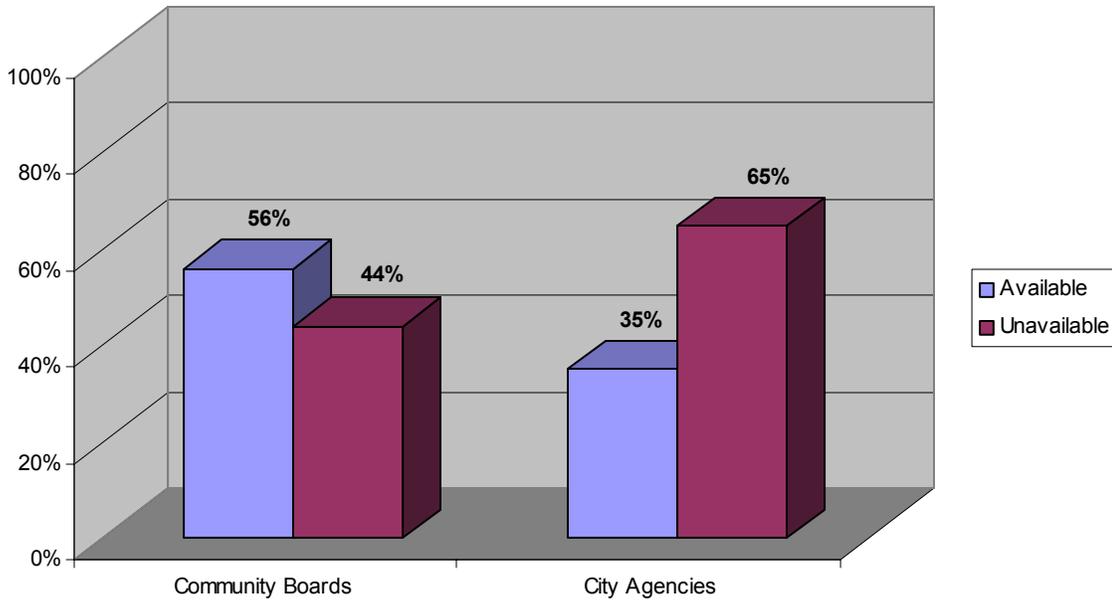
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remaining boroughs was as follows: the Bronx (53%), Queens (52%), Manhattan (50%), and Staten Island (25%).

Voter Registration Forms



Community Boards vs. City Agencies



Bronx

Investigators surveyed a total of 15 community boards and City agency sites in the Bronx. Of those sites, seven (47%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Eight (53%) of the sites visited did not have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the 12 Community board offices surveyed in the Bronx, six (50%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the three City agency sites surveyed, one (33%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public.

Brooklyn

Investigators surveyed a total of 25 community boards and City agency sites in Brooklyn. Of those sites, 10 (40%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Fifteen (60%) of the sites visited did not have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the 18 Community board offices surveyed, eight (44%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the seven City agency sites surveyed, two (29%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public.

Manhattan

Investigators surveyed a total of 34 community boards and City agency sites in Manhattan. Of those sites, 17 (50%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Seventeen (50%) of the 34 sites visited did not have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the 12 community board offices surveyed in Manhattan, eight (67%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the 22 City agency sites surveyed, nine (41%), had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public.

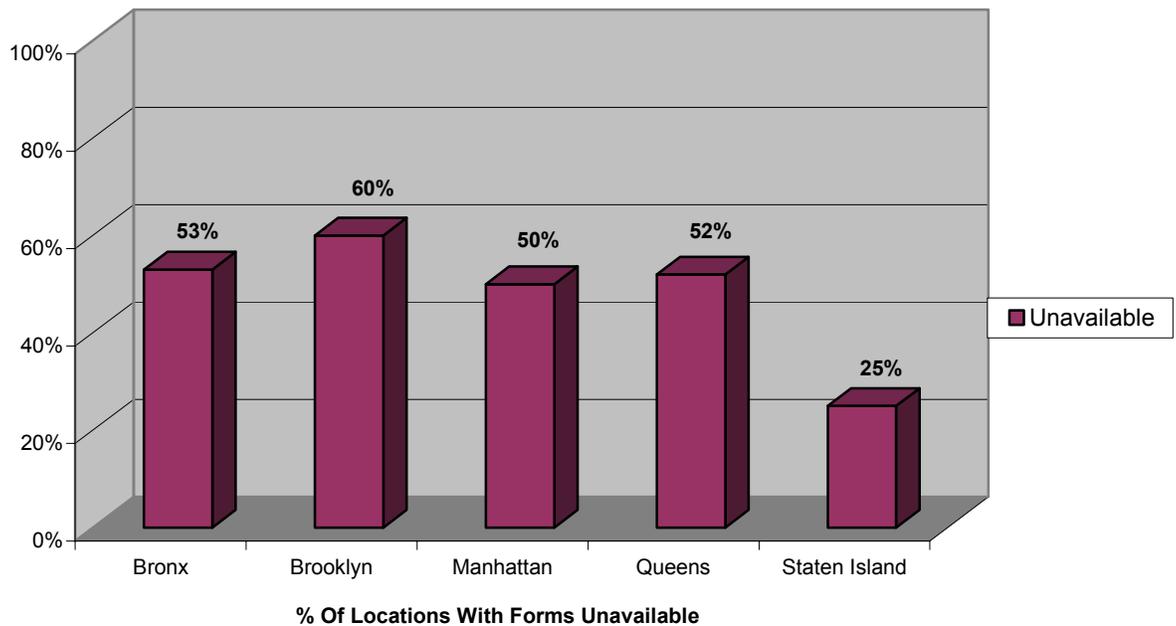
Queens

Investigators surveyed a total of 21 community boards and City agency sites in Queens. Of those sites, 10 (48%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Eleven (52%) of the sites visited did not have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the 14 community board offices surveyed in Queens, eight (57%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the seven City agency sites surveyed, two (29%), had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public.

Staten Island

Investigators surveyed a total of four (4) community boards and City agency sites in Staten Island. Of those sites, three (75%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. One (25%) of the sites visited did not have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. Of the three community board offices surveyed in Staten Island, three (100%) had voter registration forms available for distribution to the public. One City agency site surveyed in Staten Island did not have voter registration forms available for distribution to the public.

Voter Registration Forms Per Borough



Conclusion

More than one half of the community boards and designated City agency sites are not complying with the NYC Pro-Voter Law, which simply requires that they ensure that voter registration forms be made available for distribution to the public.

Particularly, as election season approaches, it is crucial that eligible NYC residents have as many opportunities to register to vote as possible, given that fewer than 50% of NYC's eligible voters are in fact registered.⁷ The NYC Pro-Voter Law provides a valuable mechanism for expanding the ranks of NYC's eligible voters. It is critical that NYC's community boards and City agencies comply with the NYC Pro-Voter Law to achieve this important policy objective.

⁷ *Infra* note 2.

Recommendations

- **New York City agencies should comply with the current NYC Pro-Voter Law.**

The NYC Pro-Voter Law is the law. All City agencies listed as participating agencies should comply with the law. The administration must ensure that agencies under its control comply with the law.

- **Pass legislation mandating annual training for city employees in implementing the Pro-Voter Law.**

Employees at all participating city agencies should have complete information about the Pro-Voter Law and their responsibilities to participate in the implementation of this law. This training should be repeated on an annual basis for all employees and should be implemented for new employees at the time of their hiring. During the investigation, it was observed that one of the main reasons why many sites didn't have voter registration forms available was because agencies' staff members were not aware of the existence of the Pro-Voter Law. Therefore, it is important to make sure that all designated City agencies train their staff on the Pro-Voter Law since it is their obligation to comply with such law.

- **Pass legislation mandating that the Borough Presidents train both paid community board staff and appointed community board members about their obligations to comply with the NYC Pro-Voter Law.**

According to the NYC Charter, Borough Presidents are obligated to provide training and technical assistance to members of Community boards within their boroughs.⁸ In accordance with their responsibility, Community board staff should be trained regarding their obligations under and compliance with the Pro-Voter Law.

- **Pass legislation that would require NYC public high schools to distribute a voter registration form with every high school diploma.**

It is vital that young people are brought into the voting process. In 2002, 229,596 students were registered in NYC high schools. Handing a voter registration form to graduating seniors would reinforce the notion that participating in democracy is vital for all citizens.

- **Mandate that voter registration forms be attached to all agency forms.**

⁸ N.Y.C. Charter, §82 (12).

In this way, anytime that a NYC citizen receives a form from participating agencies, a voter registration form is guaranteed to be attached to that form.

- **Pass legislation requiring all voter registration forms to be coded by participating agency.**

This would help Board of Elections officials to identify which agencies are properly implementing the Pro-Voter Law.

- **Pass legislation that would require each participating agency to collect voter registration forms and forward them to the Board of Elections. Each agency would be required to designate a Voter Registration Officer who would be responsible for the proper implementation of this policy.**

The national Motor Voter law requires agencies to collect and forward voter registration forms to the proper agencies. The City should follow this law, and name a staff person at each agency to have responsibility for proper implementation of the law.

- **City agencies and community boards should follow the guidelines of the Voter Assistance Commission.**

Members of the Voter Assistance Commission are appointed by the Mayor and the City Council Speaker. The Commission is a non-partisan agency that works to facilitate electoral participation of the general

public. It has developed a compliance guideline for participating New York City agencies. All participating agency heads should implement them immediately.

- **Voter registration materials should be made more available at public locations. Pass legislation requiring New York City Housing Authority and Human Resources Administration be participating agencies in the Pro-Voter Law.**

In order to increase the number of registered voters, voter registration materials should be made available at more locations. Voter registration forms should also be available at facilities such as food stamp offices, job centers, and public libraries. They could also be distributed at events that are sponsored and licensed by the city such as public concerts and street fairs. Additionally, the city could distribute voter registration materials to tenants at public housing.

APPENDIX A:

List of Visited Community Boards and City Agency Sites

**List of New York City Agency Sites and
Community Boards Visited By Investigators**

BRONX

Agency		Address
1	Community Board 1	384 East 149th Street, Suite 320
2	Community Board 2	1029 East 163rd Street
3	Community Board 3	1426 Boston Road
4	Community Board 4	1650 Selwyn Avenue, # 11A
5	Community Board 5	BCC Basement 5, Univ. Ave. & W. 181st.
6	Community Board 6	1932 Arthur Ave. Rm. 709
7	Community Board 7	229A E. 204th St.,
8	Community Board 8	5676 Riverdale Ave.
9	Community Board 9	1967 Turnbull Ave., Rm. 7
10	Community Board 10	3165 East Tremont Ave.
11	Community Board 11	1741 Colden Avenue
12	Community Board 12	4101 White Plains Rd.
13	Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development	1932 Arthur Avenue, Room 301
14	Dept. of Parks and Recreation	2530 Jerome Avenue
15	Dept. of Parks and Recreation	450 St. Ann's Avenue & 145th St.

**List of New York City Agency Sites and
Community Boards Visited By Investigators**

BROOKLYN

Agency		Address
1	Administration For Children's Services	151 Lawrence Street, 4th Fl.
2	Community Board 1	435 Graham Avenue
3	Community Board 2	350 Jay Street, 8th Fl.
4	Community Board 3	1360 Fulton Street
5	Community Board 4	315 Wyckoff Avenue
6	Community Board 5	127 Pennsylvania Avenue
7	Community Board 6	250 Baltic Avenue
8	Community Board 7	4201 4th Avenue
9	Community Board 8	1291 St. Marks Avenue
10	Community Board 9	890 Nostrand Avenue
11	Community Board 10	621 86th Street
12	Community Board 11	2214 Bath Avenue
13	Community Board 12	5910 13th Avenue
14	Community Board 13	2900 West 8th Street Rm C142
15	Community Board 14	810 East 16th Street
16	Community Board 15	KCC, 2001 Oriental Blvd.
17	Community Board 16	444 Thomas Boyland, Rm 103
18	Community Board 17	39 Remsen Avenue
19	Community Board 18	5715 Avenue H, Apt. 1D
20	Dept of Parks and Recreation	670 Lafayette Avenue
21	Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene	485 Throop Avneue
22	Dept. of Homeless Services	39-41 Bond Street
23	Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development	315 Wyckoff Avenue, Rm 501
24	Dept. of Parks and Recreation	95 Prospect Park West
25	Dept. of Parks and Recreation	261 Bedford Avenue

List of New York City Agency Sites and Community Boards Visited By Investigators

MANHATTAN

Agency	Address
1 Administration for Children's Services	150 William Street, 18th floor
2 City Clerk	265 Municipal Bldg 1 Centre St. 2nd fl South
3 Civilian Complaint Review Board	40 Rector Street, 2nd Floor
4 Commission on Human Rights	40 Rector Street, 10th floor
5 Community Board 1	49-51 Chambers St. Rm. 712
6 Community Board 2	3 Washington Sq Village , Rm. 1-A
7 Community Board 3	59 E. 4th St.
8 Community Board 4	330 West 42nd St., Suite 2618
9 Community Board 5	450 7th Ave., Rm. 2109
10 Community Board 6	866 United Nations Plaza Suite 308
11 Community Board 7	250 W. 87th St., 2nd Fl.
12 Community Board 8	505 Park Ave., Suite 620
13 Community Board 9	565 West 125th St.
14 Community Board 10	215 West 125th St.
15 Community Board 11	55 East 115th St.
16 Community Board 12	711 West 168th St.
17 Dept. of Citywide Administration Services	Municipal Bldg., 17th floor
18 Dept. of Consumer Affairs	42 Broadway
19 Dept. of Correction	60 Hudson St. 6th floor
20 Dept. of Employment	220 Church St. 5th floor
21 Dept. of Finance	One Centre St. Room 500
22 Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene	125 Worth St.
23 Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene	303 9th Avenue, 2nd floor
24 Dept. of Homeless Services	33 Beaver St.
25 Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development	100 Gold St.
26 Dept. of Parks and Recreation	533 West 59th St.
27 Dept. of Parks and Recreation	The Arsenal, Central Park 830 5th Ave.
28 Dept. of Parks and Recreation	Central Park, Mid-Park at 97th St.
29 Dept. of Parks and Recreation	Houston Street and Avenue C
30 Dept. of Probation	33 Beaver St.
31 Dept. of Small Business Services	110 William St., 3rd floor
32 Dept. of Transportation	40 Worth Street
33 Dept. of Youth & Community Development	156 William Street
34 Taxi and Limousine Commission	40 Rector Street

**List of New York City Agency Sites and
Community Boards Visited By Investigators**

QUEENS

Agency		Address
1	Community Board 1	36-01 35th Ave.
2	Community Board 2	43-22 50th St.
3	Community Board 3	82-11 37 Ave. Suite 606
4	Community Board 4	104-03 Corona Ave.
5	Community Board 5	61-23 Myrtle Ave.
6	Community Board 6	73-05 Yellowstone Blvd.
7	Community Board 7	45-35 Kissena Blvd.
8	Community Board 8	197-15 Hillside Ave.
9	Community Board 9	Queens Borough Hall 120-55 Queens Blvd Rm 310
10	Community Board 10	115-01 Lefferts Blvd., So.
11	Community Board 11	46-21 Little Neck Pkwy
12	Community Board 12	90-28 161st St.
13	Community Board 13	Queens Reform Church 219-41 Jamaica Ave.
14	Community Board 14	1931 Mott Ave., Rm. 311
15	Dept. of Environmental Protection	59-17 Junction Blvd., 10th floor
16	Dept. of Environmental Protection	96-05 Horace Harding Expressway, 1st fl
17	Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene	34-33 Junction Blvd., Room 143
18	Dept. of Homeless Services	93-05 168th Street
19	Dept. of Parks and Recreation	177th Street and Baisley Blvd.
20	Dept. of Parks and Recreation	107-20 Northern Boulevard at 108th St.
21	Dept. of Parks and Recreation	85th Street & 30th Avenue

**List of New York City Agency Sites and
Community Boards Visited By Investigators**

STATEN ISLAND

Agency		Address
1	Community Board 1	1 Edgewater Plaza, Room 217
2	Community Board 2	Sea View Hosp. Community Srvs. Bldg., 460 Brielle Ave.
3	Community Board 3	655-218 Rossville Ave.
4	Dept. of Parks and Recreation	1150 Clove Road

APPENDIX B:

New York City Offices Designated as Participating Voter Registration Agencies

New York City Offices Designated as Participating Voter Registration Agencies

- The Administration For Children's Services
- The City Clerk
- The Civilian Complaint Review Board
- The Commission On Human Rights
- Community Boards
- The Department Of Citywide Administrative Services
- The Department Of Consumer Affairs
- The Department Of Correction
- The Department Of Employment
- The Department Of Environmental Protection
- The Department Of Finance
- The Department Of Health And Mental Hygiene
- The Department Of Homeless Services
- The Department Of Housing Preservation And Development
- The Department Of Parks And Recreation
- The Department Of Probation
- The Department Of Small Business Services
- The Taxi And Limousine Commission
- The Department Of Transportation
- The Department Of Youth And Community Development

APPENDIX C:

New York City Charter §1057-A

§ 1056. Cooperation of mayoral agencies. Heads of mayoral agencies shall cooperate with the board of elections and the coordinator of voter assistance to encourage voter registration and voting by all residents of the city of New York eligible to vote, and shall prepare annually, in accordance with rules and guidelines of the coordinator of voter assistance, plans specifying the resources, opportunities, and locations the agency can provide for voter assistance activities.

§ 1057. Non-partisanship in program operations. The board, commission and coordinator shall conduct all their activities in a strictly non-partisan manner.

§ 1057-a. Agency based voter registration. Each agency designated as a participating agency under the provisions of this section shall implement and administer a program of distribution of voter registration forms pursuant to the provisions of this section. The following offices are hereby designated as participating voter registration agencies: The administration for children's services, the city clerk, the civilian complaint review board, the commission on human rights, community boards, the department of small business services, the department of citywide administrative services, the department of consumer affairs, the department of correction, the department of employment, the department of environmental protection, the department of finance, the department of health and mental hygiene, the department of homeless services, the department of housing preservation and development, the department of mental health, the department of parks and recreation, the department of probation, the taxi and limousine commission, the department of transportation and the department of youth and community development. Participating agencies shall include a mandate in all new or renewed agreements with those subcontractors having regular contact with the public in the daily administration of their business to follow the guidelines of this section. Such participating agencies shall be required to offer voter registration forms to all persons together with written applications for services, renewal or recertification for services and change of address relating to such services; provided however that this section shall not apply to services that must be provided to prevent actual or potential danger to the life, health, or safety of any individual or of the public. Such agencies may provide assistance to applicants in completing voter registration forms, if so requested. Such agencies may also, in their discretion, receive and transmit the completed application form from any applicants who wish to have such form transmitted to the board of elections for the city of New York.

1. Participating agencies shall adopt such rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement this section. The New York city voter assistance commission shall prepare and distribute to participating agencies written advisory agency guidelines as to the implementation of this section and may establish training programs for employees of participating agencies. Participating agencies may consider such advisory agency guidelines in the promulgation of their rules and regulations.

2. Participating agencies shall provide and distribute voter registration forms to all persons together with written applications for services, renewal or recertification for services and change of address relating to such services; provided however that this section shall not apply to services that must be provided to prevent actual or potential

danger to life, health or safety of any individual or of the public. Participating agency staff may provide assistance in completing these distributed voter registration forms, if so requested. Participating agencies shall also include a voter registration form with any agency communication sent through the United States mail for the purpose of supplying clients with application, renewal or recertification for services and change of address relating to such services materials. Participating agencies shall also incorporate an opportunity to request a voter registration application into any application for services, renewal or recertification for services and change of address relating to such services provided on computer terminals, the World Wide Web or the Internet. Any person indicating that they wish to be sent a voter registration form, via computer terminals, the World Wide Web or the Internet shall be sent such a form by the participating agency, or directed to a bank on that system where such a form may be downloaded.

3. Participating agencies shall also:

a. at the earliest practicable or next regularly scheduled printing of their forms, physically incorporate the voter registration forms with their own application forms in a manner that permits the voter registration portion to be detached therefrom. Until such time when the agency amends its form, each agency should affix or include a postage paid board of elections for the city of New York voter registration form to or with its application, renewal, recertification and change of address forms;

b. use the board of elections of the city of New York coded voter registration forms which designate such forms as originating from participating agencies; and

c. transmit any completed forms collected in their discretion to the board of elections of the city of New York within two weeks of the receipt of such completed forms at the participating agency. If a completed form is accepted within five days before the last day for registration to vote in a citywide election, such completed form shall be transmitted by the participating agency to the board of elections of the city of New York not later than five days after the date of acceptance.

4. All persons seeking voter registration forms and information shall be advised in writing together with other written materials provided by agencies or by appropriate publicity that government services are not conditioned on being registered to vote. No statement shall be made nor any action taken by an agency employee to discourage the applicant from registering to vote or to enroll in any particular political party.

5. The completion of the voter registration form by an applicant is voluntary.

6. Employees of a participating agency who provide voter registration assistance shall not:

a. seek to influence an applicant's political preference or party designation;

b. display any political preference or party allegiance;

c. make any statement to an applicant or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to discourage the applicant from registering to vote; or

d. make any statement to an applicant or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to lead the applicant to believe that a decision to register or not to register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits.

7. Each participating agency, department, division and office that makes available voter registration forms shall prominently display

promotional materials designed and approved by the board of elections for the city of New York or state board of elections for use in state agency programs.

CHAPTER 47
PUBLIC ACCESS TO MEETINGS AND INFORMATION

§ 1058. Heads of departments to furnish copies of papers on demand. The heads of all administrations and departments, except the police and law departments, and the chiefs of each and every division or bureau thereof, and all borough presidents shall, with reasonable promptness, furnish to any taxpayer desiring the same, a true and certified copy of any book, account or paper kept by such administration, department, bureau or office, or such part thereof as may be demanded, upon payment in advance of ten cents for every hundred words thereof by the person demanding the same. The provisions of this section shall not apply to any papers prepared by or for the comptroller for use in any proceeding to adjust or pay a claim against the city or any agency, or by or for counsel for use in actions or proceedings to which the city or any agency is a party, or for use in any investigation authorized by this charter.

§ 1059. Inspection by taxpayers of books and papers. All books, accounts and papers in the office of any borough president or any division or bureau thereof, or in any city administration or department or any division or bureau thereof, except the police and law departments, shall at all times be open to the inspection of any taxpayer, subject to such reasonable rules and regulations in regard to the time and manner of such inspection as the borough president, administration, department, office, division or bureau may make; in case such inspection shall be refused, such taxpayer, on his sworn petition, describing the particular book, account or paper that he desires to inspect, may, upon notice of not less than one day, apply to any justice of the supreme court for an order that he be allowed to make such inspection as such justice shall by his order authorize. The provisions of this section shall not apply to any papers prepared by or for the comptroller for use in any proceedings to adjust or pay a claim against the city or any agency, or by or for counsel for use in actions or proceedings to which the city or any agency is a party, or for use in any investigation authorized by this charter.

§ 1060. Public attendance at executive sessions. a. Except as otherwise provided pursuant to subdivision b of this section, the public may attend all sessions or meetings of the following agencies whenever items on the calendar of such agency are to be considered and acted upon in a preliminary or final manner: art commission, conciliation and appeals board, environmental control board, board of health, landmarks preservation commission, city planning commission, board of standards and appeals, tax commission, youth board, and the council and its committees.

b. Any agency specified pursuant to subdivision a of this section may convene an executive session closed to the public by a three-fourths vote of all of its members, but shall not take final action at any such meeting.

§ 1061. Commission on public information and communication. a. There shall be a commission on public information and communication which