



Samuel A.A. Levine
Commissioner

42 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dial 311
(212-NEW-YORK)

nyc.gov/dcwp

Remarks as Prepared: DCWP Commissioner Levine Delivers Remarks Announcing NYC Free Tax Prep

February 3, 2026

Good morning, and thank you for being here.

I'm proud to stand here alongside Mayor Mamdani today as we announce another concrete step to make life more affordable for New Yorkers.

Every year, the typical New Yorker pays about \$377 in fees just to file their taxes. That fee is its own kind of tax – cutting into what for many New Yorkers is their biggest “paycheck” of the year.

And this year, with the Trump Administration having shut down the federal Direct File option, New Yorkers could face even higher costs, just to claim money they already earned.

Here with our partner, Health+Hospitals, we're excited to kick off NYC Free Tax Prep program to help New Yorkers get their full refund for free.

Each year, our Department of Consumer and Worker Protection partners with IRS-certified volunteer tax preparers at organizations across the five boroughs to provide FREE, ACCURATE and PROFESSIONAL tax preparation services to tens of thousands of New Yorkers.

If you made \$97,000 or less as a family in 2025, or \$68,000 as an individual or couple without children or dependents, you are eligible to take advantage of NYC Free Tax Prep and avoid costly tax preparation fees AND claim all the important tax credits that you're entitled to.

Let me translate that: nearly half of New Yorkers can file their taxes for free.

Last year alone, NYC Free Tax Prep helped complete more than 110,000 returns, saving New Yorkers approximately \$38.2 million in tax prep fees.

This year, under Mayor Mamdani's leadership, we are aiming to grow that figure significantly and save New Yorkers tens of millions of dollars, at a time when every dollar counts.



And critically, New Yorkers can say goodbye to fees without sacrificing quality. We offer professional, IRS-certified volunteer tax preparers to make sure you claim every credit you're entitled to.

That's especially important this year. This tax season comes with major changes, including the phasing out of paper checks for refunds, an expansion of Empire State Child Credit, and other changes that can make a huge difference for households.

Last year, a mom in the Bronx was able to catch up on bills, groceries, household necessities, and clothes for her two young daughters after receiving more than \$14,000 in her refund – including the EITC and Child Tax Credit. She has used NYC Free Tax Prep for years to avoid the high fees that other places charge.

New Yorkers deserve to claim these credits and get their full refund without having to pay a commercial preparer any of their hard-earned money. With our trusted, professional services – available in person and remotely – eligible New Yorkers can file safely, confidently, and for free.

And that is not the only good news this tax season. Alongside our launch of NYC Free Tax Prep, today we are also announcing a crackdown on predatory tax preparers who use junk fees and deceptive practices to exploit New Yorkers.

In response to Mayor Mamdani's Executive Order targeting junk fees across our economy, DCWP is accelerating enforcement this tax season. We are deploying inspectors across our city to ensure tax preparers are following the law. We are issuing warning letters reminding preparers of the city's ban on illegal overcharging and hidden fees. And we're urging New Yorkers to ask your preparer for the Consumer Bill of Rights before paying anyone to file your taxes, and to file a complaint with us if you believe you've been mistreated.

For New Yorkers who pay to prepare their taxes, we are committed to ensuring they don't get ripped off. But I can't emphasize enough that the best way not to get ripped off is to use our free services.

We now have **more than 140 sites** across the city that offer flexible options to meet your needs, including specialized tax prep to assist self-employed and small businesses – these services are tailored to the needs of gig workers – including delivery workers, freelancers and small business owners who often face barriers to filing taxes and managing financial recordkeeping.

Visit nyc.gov/TaxPrep and look at our map for locations and details.



The deadline to file a tax return for your 2025 taxes is April 15, 2026. But NYC Free Tax Prep operates year round, so if you miss the deadline or need help with returns from the past three years, we're here for you.

This is what affordability looks like in practice: fewer junk fees, exceptional public services, and more money in New Yorkers' pockets.