

Fleet Spotlight: Tonya Tillery, Homeless Services (DHS) Fleet

By: Keith T. Kerman & Brianna Dolmo

This week, we spotlight Tonya Tillery, the newly appointed Fleet Director at New York City's Department of Homeless Services (DHS). Tonya began with NYC with HRA in 1997 as an Eligibility Specialist. In 1998, she joined the NYPD as a police officer, where she served for five years. Tonya later joined DHS in 2005.

Caring for the City's homeless population is a challenging and complex process. Homeless families at risk of sleeping on the street need immediate housing. Special care and discretion must be afforded to at-risk individuals fleeing domestic violence. Many homeless individuals have medical issues and little means of getting to their doctor's appointments and treatment centers. The agency's skilled trades and maintenance teams work to establish safe and comfortable spaces at facilities citywide. DHS also helps clients with transportation support when ready and able to move into permanent housing.

Fleet and transportation play a critical role in supporting all of these essential services, and Tonya is now in charge of these efforts. DHS operates a 149-vehicle fleet comprised of sedans, vans, trucks, and a unique fleet of minibuses that transport homeless individuals to sites citywide.

Tonya manages all aspects of fleet operations, including acquisitions, compliance, safety, maintenance, E-Z pass, car share, and budgeting. She has also been a critical partner in sustainability, recently transitioning 50 DHS vehicles, 33% of



the fleet, to all-electric replacements obtained with the support of DCAS. The agency also has an additional 40 hybrid vehicles. All DHS trucks use renewable diesel through fueling support from New York City's Department of Environmental Protection, NYC Parks, and a private vendor.

On the safety side, Tonya has worked with DCAS to reduce high-risk driving, as tracked through the DCAS Fleet Office of Real Time Tracking (FORT). DHS is also implementing an intelligent speed assistance (ISA) program for its fleet, with 41 vehicles installed so far, one of the largest programs citywide.

Tonya is excited about the new DCAS contract with car rental companies to expand the agency's EV rideshare program. She is currently working with New York City Department of Correction, New York Public Library, and DCAS on a vehicle transfer initiative that will repurpose buses and box vans to support transport logistics for the City's migrant crisis while minimizing costs for new trucks.

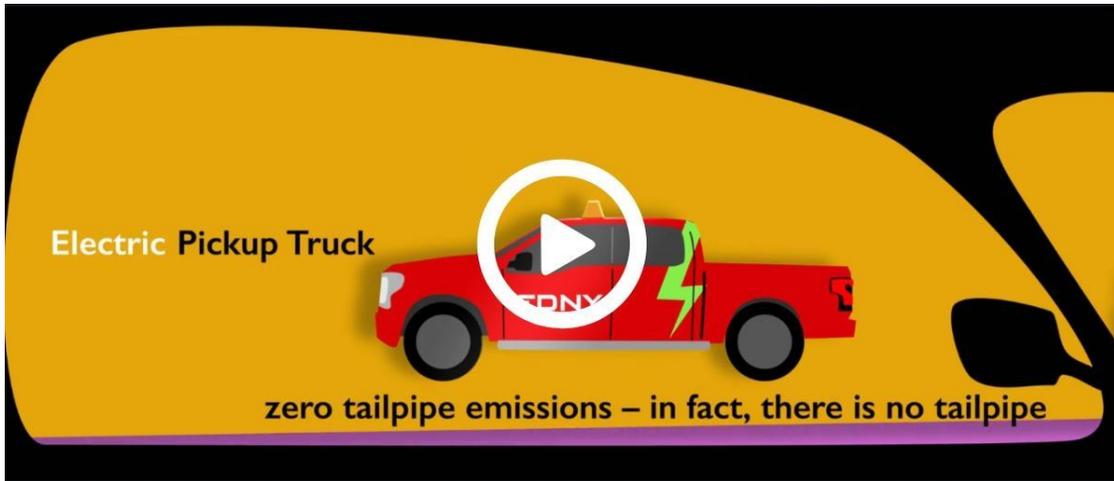


When asked about Tonya's work, Associate Commissioner of Support Services Bob Groppe said the following: "Tonya has been the consummate professional from the moment she joined fleet. She jumped in with both feet and has always demonstrated a "can-do" attitude. The DHS Fleet unit has responded to some incredible challenges during her tenure, including the wave of migrants who have come to NYC needing services. Our Fleet has taken on every task and still continues to perform every day."

Tonya has earned three separate graduate school degrees: a Master's in Public Administration and Criminal Justice from John Jay and a Master's of Social Work from Hunter College. When she is not at work, Tonya likes to focus on self-care and de-stressing. She enjoys yoga, listening to R&B music, and traveling, having just recently taken a trip to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

DHS and DCAS thank and recognize Tonya for 27 years of serving NYC in public safety roles and look forward to many more.

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