

The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Department) submits this report pursuant to NYC Administrative Code § 17.133.3 to detail rat mitigation efforts in the Rat Mitigation Zones (RMZ). As required, this report includes:

1. The metrics the Department is using to measure the efficacy of rat mitigation in such zones, including a description of whether the department has seen improvement, as measured by such metrics, and, if so, how such improvement has been achieved;
2. An overview of current and planned rat mitigation measures, including goals and specific benchmarks and timelines, in each such zone;
3. A description of the public outreach measures undertaken by the department in relation to rat mitigation in each such zone;
4. Explanations of the creation or elimination of rat mitigation zones, or any change of boundaries of such zone, since the previous report, if applicable; and
5. Explanations of any changes to the rat mitigation measures used in each such zone since the previous report, if applicable.

## **Introduction**

The Department's rat control program takes a multi-pronged, evidence-based approach across New York City that builds on our decades of experience. Our approach, called Integrated Pest Management (IPM), emphasizes inspections, monitoring, and removal of conditions that rats need to survive. Rats thrive when they have ready access to food and water, a place to live, and effective transportation routes. That means that reducing the rat population requires managing garbage, eliminating nesting areas, and repairing cracks and holes in sidewalks, structures, and buildings. Safe, targeted treatment is the final piece of an effective integrated pest management program. Key components of NYC's IPM program are listed below:

- Proactive inspections of every property in a particular area enable the Department to learn where rat activity is greatest and monitor progress over time;
- Complaint inspections address New Yorkers' concerns;
- Enforcement of the NYC Health Code against property owners directs them to control rats or the conditions supporting rats;
- Providing technical assistance, monitoring, and agency referrals regarding city-owned property supports New York City's rat control efforts;
- Extermination by licensed pest management professionals on private properties where the owner fails to do so and billing for the work fills gaps where private actors fail to maintain their properties;
- Sealing or collapsing rat burrows by a stoppage team assists with responding to rats in the public realm;
- Robust outreach and education helps New Yorkers learn best practices for controlling rats; and
- Engaging the public by making inspection activities public on the Rat Information Portal (<https://a816-dohbesp.nyc.gov/IndicatorPublic/Rats/>)—a web-based mapping application that allows you to view the rat inspection and action data collected by the Health

Department—and describing rat control programs on the Environment and Health Portal (<https://a816-dohbesp.nyc.gov/IndicatorPublic/beta/key-topics/pests/rat-mitigation-zones/>) enables New Yorkers to see how, together, we are working to reduce rat activity.

The Department’s inspection data shows that rat activity in NYC neighborhoods is not equally distributed. Some neighborhoods bear a higher burden of rat infestation. Those neighborhoods tend to be densely populated with high foot traffic, an abundance of food service establishments, and a higher proportion of public property. To effectively address rats, city agencies, property owners, and residents in these areas must work together. Rats do not observe property lines or distinguish between public and private ownership. To reduce rat populations in New York, everyone in a neighborhood, both private and public, must work together, across our usual boundaries and in times and places that matter most to rats.

The areas of the city found to be the most infested need intensive inter-agency support to address the underlying, structural, and behavioral conditions that support high rat populations. The Department refers to these areas as Rat Mitigation Zones (RMZ or zone). In 2023, Local Law 110 required the Department to codify RMZ designations using certain criteria. The Department promulgated an agency regulation on July 7, 2023, and designated four RMZ: the Grand Concourse neighborhoods in the Bronx; Bushwick, Bedford Stuyvesant, and Prospect Heights in Brooklyn; West, Central, and East Harlem; and the East Village, Lower East Side, and Chinatown in Manhattan. Table 1 describes the four RMZ. These zones consist of 37,545 properties (tax lots), 193 parks, 79 NYCHA developments, and 179 public schools.

**Table 1: Surveyed Properties in the RMZs as of June 2023**

RMZ	Total Lots	Total NYCHA		Total DOE
		Developments	Total DPR Parks	Schools
Bronx Grand Concourse	8,458	17	64	57
Brooklyn Bed Stuy and Bushwick	14,654	10	28	31
Manhattan Harlem	10,028	28	69	64
Manhattan East Village and Chinatown	4,405	24	32	27
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37,545</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>179</b>

This report tracks progress in the first four months of implementing the Local Law.

**1. The metrics the Department is using to measure the efficacy of rat mitigation in such zones, including a description of whether the department has seen improvement, as measured by such metrics, and, if so, how such improvement has been achieved.**

The Department is using the metrics set out in the Local Law to measure the efficacy of rat mitigation efforts. Those are:

- (1) Commissioner orders to abate (COTA). The number and percentage of inspections for properties within a given area that resulted in a COTA issued by the Department pursuant to section 151.02 of the Health Code in a 12-month period.
- (2) City agency referral letters. The number and percentage of inspections for properties within a given area that resulted in the issuance of a city agency referral letter by the Department in a 12-month period.

- (3) Summonses. The number and percentage of inspections for rat activity for private properties within a given area that have resulted in the issuance of a summons pursuant to section 151.02 of the Health Code in a 12-month period.
- (4) Rat exterminations. The number of rat baiting visits by the Department at properties within a given area in a 12-month period, executed by the Department pursuant to section 17-147 of the Administrative Code following a failure to comply with an order issued pursuant to section 151.02 of the Health Code.
- (5) Reports to 311. The number and nature of 311 requests for service or complaints related to rat activity within any 12-month period within a given area.
- (6) Susceptibility to rat infestation. The number of properties that are managed by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation that are susceptible to rat infestation or have failed inspection for rat infestation in a 12-month period.
- (7) Availability of resources. The availability of resources to implement rat mitigation measures and the most efficient use of such resources.

Using these seven criteria to measure progress, the Department has intensified the city's inter-agency anti-rat work, collaborating with NYC Parks, NYCHA, and NYC Public Schools, with additional resources provided by the Mayor's Office. This effort, called the Neighborhood Rat Reduction (NRR) Initiative, brings together multiple city agencies to provide a concentrated IPM effort to reduce rat activity on private and public property in the four RMZ.

Data collected in the first six months of 2022 was used to create a baseline measure. Data for calendar year 2022 was compiled and posted to the Department website: [Data on rat inspections | Environment & Health Data Portal](#).

Under the Neighborhood Rat Reduction Initiative, inspection teams have ramped up inspections in the zones. Routine inspections in buildings with significant rat activity are holding private-property owners accountable. Monthly surveys of city agency property ensure that the agencies are doing their part to manage rats in the public realm. The Department, in partnership with Parks, Schools, and NYCHA, is testing rat mitigation methods, renewing the focus on IPM, and evaluating impact in the zones. Inter-agency work has ramped up across all four zones and is being carefully tracked in monthly Rat Task Force meetings at City Hall.

In 2022, we saw a significant rise in complaints about rats and properties failing inspection for rat activity during the aftermath of the COVID-19 pause to city services. At the height of the pandemic, focus shifted to COVID work and many systems that helped to control rats (such as routine cleaning and trash removal, repairs, and treatment for rats) were put on hold in both the public and private sector. In some cases, the addition of the Open Restaurant program made more food and harborage available to rats. We had been making great progress pre-pandemic. But the more than two years of reduced focus on rat control will take a while to overcome. We know what works to manage rat populations: routine cleaning and garbage removal, containerization of garbage in between pick-ups, repairs, and pest-proofing along with routine inspections, monitoring, and targeted treatment using best practice methods. In 2022 and 2023, city agencies have successfully worked together to put these systems back in place. New Yorkers are engaged through our free "Rat Academy," new laws and policies will address food availability for rats, and the new Open Restaurant program will help to address the challenges

posed by dining in the streets. In 2023, we are not yet seeing improvements in the metrics for this first four months since the law passed. We are reporting on these so New Yorkers can track along with us. Rat control requires everyone working together across the public sector and private sector. We need building and business owners and property managers to work alongside city agencies to reduce the conditions that rats need to thrive.

## **2. An overview of current and planned rat mitigation measures, including goals and specific benchmarks and timelines, in each such zone.**

The Department undertakes these rat mitigation measures in the RMZ:

- Neighborhood rat indexing: Department inspectors visually inspect the exterior of every property (tax lot) on a block looking for active rat signs (ARS) or conditions that attract them.
- Complaint response inspections: A property with 311 complaints will receive additional inspections in addition to the proactive indexing inspection.
- Enforcement: When a private property fails an initial inspection, the Department issues an order requiring the property owner to correct the conditions and then follows up to see whether the owner has complied. When a property fails a compliance inspection, a summons is issued to the property owner.
- City agency referrals: When a public property fails inspection, the Department issues a referral to the owner agency for remediation and tracks remediation efforts.
- Outreach and education: The Department has a robust community engagement program described below.
- Extermination and stoppage: The Department's exterminators address conditions where a property owner fails to act and address public realm locations on an emergency basis. The stoppage team works to seal structural holes or collapse earthen rat burrows in the public realm.
- Collaboration with NYC Parks, NYCHA, and NYC Public Schools: The Department conducts monthly surveys of rat activity on public properties and works with these agencies to track remediation efforts.
- Research and technical assistance: Ensure NYC maintains best practices.

These strategies are evidence-based and data-driven. We measure outcomes, which enables us to track ongoing progress. Tables 2-5 provide data on measures implemented by the Department.

### 311 Complaints and Initial Inspections

Table 2 shows the number of 311 complaints received in each of the four RMZ for all four rodent descriptors during the first six months of 2023. There were 16,308 complaints across the four RMZ in the first six months of 2023.

Table 3 provides the number of initial inspections conducted during the first six months of 2023. The Department performed 42,758 inspections in the first six months of 2023. The number of inspections is greater than the number of properties in each zone because of multiple inspections being performed on properties that have complaints.

The number of failed inspections is the number of inspections in which any Health Code violation was identified at the time of inspection including garbage conditions, harborage conditions, or any active rat signs. The percent of failed initial inspection for active rat signs (ARS) is the primary metric used to assess neighborhoods.

In the first six months of 2023, the Harlem RMZ had the highest failure rate for ARS of 29%, followed by the Bronx RMZ with a failure rate of 28%. The East Village and Chinatown RMZ had the highest failure rate for city agency referrals, reflecting the higher proportion of city-owned property in this neighborhood. The Brooklyn RMZ had the highest number of properties and, with an ARS failure rate of 22%, the highest number of COTAs mailed to private property owners. Overall, in the first six months of 2023 in the four zones, over 10,000 Orders to Abate were mailed to private property owners and over 2,500 referrals were made to city agencies for remediation.

**Table 2: 311 Complaints by RMZ and Descriptor, January to June 2023**

RMZ	Condition				Signs of Rodents Total
	Attracting Rodents	Mouse Sighting	Rat Sighting		
Bronx Grand Concourse	98	79	335	64	576
Brooklyn Bed Stuy and Bushwick	242	38	763	137	1,180
Manhattan Harlem	249	104	921	469	1,743
Manhattan East Village and Chinatown	56	16	217	43	332
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,050</b>	<b>1,292</b>	<b>10,257</b>	<b>1,701</b>	<b>16,308</b>

**Table 3: Initial Inspections by RMZ, January to June 2023**

RMZ	Total Lots	Total Inspections	Failed Inspections	Failed Inspections for ARS	City Agency Referral	
					Letters	COTAs
Bronx Grand Concourse	8,458	10,072	3,521 (35%)	2,781 (28%)	751 (7%)	2,740 (27%)
Brooklyn Bed Stuy and Bushwick	14,654	15,666	3,785 (24%)	3,427 (22%)	349 (2%)	3,395 (22%)
Manhattan Harlem	10,028	11,666	4,042 (35%)	3,330 (29%)	878 (8%)	3,116 (27%)
Manhattan East Village and Chinatown	4,405	5,350	1,384 (26%)	1,106 (21%)	526 (10%)	837 (16%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37,545</b>	<b>42,754</b>	<b>12,732 (30%)</b>	<b>10,644 (25%)</b>	<b>2,504 (6%)</b>	<b>10,088 (24%)</b>

### Compliance Inspections and enforcement on private properties

Within about four weeks of the COTA being mailed to the owner of a private property, an inspector will conduct a follow-up (compliance) inspection. If no ARS are present or if no conditions that rats favor are present, the property passes the compliance inspection. If such signs or conditions are still present, the property fails the compliance inspection, and the Department issues a summons subject to fines to the owner of the property. The Department may elevate the enforcement for properties that have a history of failing inspections, increasing the fine amounts.

Table 4 shows the number of compliance inspections conducted on private properties during the first six months of 2023, the number and percent that failed inspection for any Health Code violation, and the number and percent that failed for ARS. Harlem had the highest failure rate on compliance at 77%, with 71% of compliance inspections failing for ARS on the property. The East Village and Chinatown had the lowest failure rate on compliance at 50%, with 44% of compliance inspections failing for ARS, suggesting that private property owners in lower Manhattan were most successful in remediation. The higher failure rate in Harlem may also be because this zone launched in 2023 while the other three zones have had multiple prior years of inspections.

**Table 4: Compliance Inspections by RMZ, January to June 2023**

<b>NRR</b>	<b>Total Inspections</b>	<b>Failed Inspections Resulting in Summons</b>	<b>Failed Inspections for ARS</b>
Bronx Grand Concourse	2,339	1,429 (61%)	1,228 (53%)
Brooklyn Bed Stuy and Bushwick	2,782	1,859 (67%)	1,778 (64%)
Manhattan Harlem	2,323	1,783 (77%)	1,657 (71%)
Manhattan East Village and Chinatown	765	381 (50%)	335 (44%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8,209</b>	<b>5,452 (66%)</b>	<b>4,998 (61%)</b>

### Extermination and Stoppage Visits by the Department on private property and in the public realm

Property owners are required to maintain their property free of rats and the conditions that cause them. This includes having to hire a pest management company when rat activity is identified. In cases where owners fail to maintain their property, the Department may act by treating the private property and billing the owner for the work. Department exterminators may also treat public spaces on an emergency basis or conduct stoppage including burrow harassment (collapsing rat burrows) and sealing up the holes and cracks that allow for the free movement of rats. City agencies are responsible for maintaining their property free of rats as well and use a combination of staff and contractors for treatment.

Table 5 provides a count of extermination visits by the Department extermination team and the percent on which rodenticide bait is applied (rat burrow baiting or bait station installation or refill). Table 5 also includes a count of stoppage team visits to seal structural holes or collapse earthen rat burrows for the first six months of 2023. Harlem had the highest number of visits by a Department exterminator and the highest number of visits by the stoppage team.

**Table 5: Extermination and Stoppage Visits by RMZ, January to June 2023**

RMZ	Exterminations		Stoppage
	Total Visits By Exterminator	% Bait Applied	Total Visits
Bronx Grand Concourse	2,326	93%	317
Brooklyn Bed Stuy and Bushwick	3,148	96%	448
Manhattan Harlem	4,404	95%	769
Manhattan East Village and Chinatown	1,341	95%	470
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11,219</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>2,004</b>

### 3. A description of the public outreach measures undertaken by the department in relation to rat mitigation in each such zone.

The Department has an active community outreach program. The outreach and education program includes free “Rat Academy” classes for many different audiences to learn IPM techniques; guidance materials in multiple languages on rat reduction and prevention; along with a robust online Rat Information Portal ([www.nyc.gov/rats](http://www.nyc.gov/rats)) which provides access to both guidance materials and inspection results.

The Health Department’s Rat Academy offers free trainings to the public on using IPM practices to safely prevent and manage rats. Any elected official, Business Improvement District, block association, or community group can sponsor or host a Rat Academy training for their area, and the Department can tailor the Rat Academy curriculum to the audience and the neighborhood. There are programs for private property management companies, landlords, owners, businesses, urban gardeners, and city agencies. Attendees are also taught to use the Rat Information Portal to track inspections.

From January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023, the Department offered 20 Rat Academy Trainings across four boroughs including Brooklyn (8), Manhattan (8), Bronx (2), and Queens (2). The trainings had a total of 1,640 unique registrations and 840 training participants. Mayor Eric Adams and Director of Rodent Mitigation Kathleen Corradi showed their support for this work by attending multiple Academies and more than a dozen Council Members sponsored these events. In the first six months of 2023, the Department also partnered with Small Business Services (SBS) to offer four trainings to BIDs and SBS staff on rat prevention for outdoor dining.

Some of the education materials shared at each event include:

- [Pest Management Tips for Building Residents](#) (PDF)  
Other Languages: [Español](#)
- [Preventing Rats on Your Property](#) (PDF)  
Other Languages: [Español](#) | [中文](#)
- [How to Control Pests Safely](#) (PDF)  
Other Languages: [Español](#)

- [Feed a Pigeon Feed a Rat Poster](#) (PDF)  
Other Languages: [Español](#) | [简体中文](#)
- [5 Star Rat Restaurant Poster](#) (PDF)  
Other Languages: [Español](#) | [简体中文](#)

The Rat Academy Team attends community events to promote best practices in rat prevention strategies, provide printed materials on rat prevention, respond to complaints, questions, and comments, and share our Rat Academy programming online. From January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023, the team attended 27 Community Events/Health Fairs across four boroughs including Brooklyn (6), Manhattan (5), Bronx (7), and Queens (9). Case managers assigned to the four rat mitigation zones also routinely engage with the community and offer personalized on-site support to owners and businesses that need assistance.

**4. Explanations of the creation or elimination of rat mitigation zones, or any change of boundaries of such zone, since the previous report, if applicable.**

The creation of the RMZ by rule promulgated on July 7, 2023, is described above. This is the first annual report, and the rule has been in effect for only four months. Accordingly, there are no changes to report.

**5. Explanations of any changes to the rat mitigation measures used in each such zone since the previous report, if applicable.**

This is the first annual report, and there are accordingly no changes to report.