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NYC PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT UNIT EXPANDS ACCESS TO BENEFITS AND STRENGTHENS HOUSING SUPPORT THROUGH DIRECT OUTREACH

NEW YORK — The Mayor’s Public Engagement Unit (PEU) today released its end-of-administration summary highlighting significant progress in expanding access to benefits and strengthening housing stability across New York City. Over the past four years, PEU has broadened its reach through creative new outreach initiatives in all five boroughs, ensuring that residents—particularly those historically marginalized—have clear, timely, and culturally competent pathways to City services.

“Over the last 10 years, PEU has re-imagined what it means for government to increase access to services,” said **Adrienne Lever, Executive Director of the Public Engagement Unit**. “By combining community partnerships, door-to-door outreach, and one-on-one support, our teams are removing barriers and delivering services in a way that is human-centered and grounded in trust.”

“Our Outreach Specialists aren’t just connecting people to programs—they’re building relationships,” said **Isolina De La Cruz, Executive Deputy Director of PEU**. “This work lays the foundation for a more equitable city, and we’re proud to help strengthen the civic infrastructure that makes that possible.”

BRINGING GOVERNMENT TO COMMUNITIES

Throughout the year, PEU deepened its presence in neighborhoods citywide, bringing services directly to residents through new community outreach initiatives and by leveraging creative media campaigns, technology, and strategic partnerships.

PEU also invested in youth leadership and civic workforce development, expanding collaboration with CUNY campuses and deploying hundreds of students and City employee volunteers to help reach residents where they live, work, and gather. This strategy not only increases access to critical services today, but also it cultivates the next generation of public-service leaders poised to support the City’s long-term goals around equity, affordability, and inclusion.

Key Highlights Include:

- Hosting 11 [Benefits On Your Block](#) on-site enrollment fairs with nearly 30 agency and CBO partners, reaching more than 10,000 New Yorkers.
- Providing nearly 100,000 calls and peer-to-peer texts to families with children, offering personalized childcare enrollment assistance in multiple languages.
- Mobilizing 300 City employees and distributing 200,000 flyers to support benefits access and on-site screenings during the “[Money in Your Pocket](#)” campaign in 2024.
- Training 300 CUNY “Benefit Corps” students to expand outreach capacity and build a pipeline of young civic leaders.

Community Spotlight

At a *Benefits On Your Block* event in Canarsie, Brooklyn, PEU helped Wayne, a resident who had long struggled to navigate City systems, enroll in SNAP and other programs. “I met people who were willing to help,” Wayne said. “PEU sat with me, reviewed my eligibility, and walked me through the steps. Especially for people my age who are not computer savvy, it made all the difference.”

HOUSING STABILITY AND TENANT PROTECTION

PEU reinforced the City’s housing support infrastructure through proactive tenant engagement, case management, and expanded the Tenant Helpline’s live-call services—helping thousands of New Yorkers navigate the complexities of housing assistance, rent protections, and available financial support.

PEU also supported both tenants and low-income landlords through outreach campaigns for programs like Rent Freeze and lien sale prevention. Rent Freeze helps eligible older adults and New Yorkers with disabilities stabilize their housing by freezing their rent and preventing future increases. The lien sale prevention program identifies homeowners at risk of losing their homes due to unpaid property taxes, water bills, or other municipal charges and connects them with assistance to halt the process before it progresses.

Through PEU’s [Home Support Unit](#), PEU helps small landlords navigate complex systems by identifying vacant units, matching them with qualified tenants with housing vouchers, and providing administrative support to streamline the rental process.

Key Highlights Include:

- Assisting more than 27,000 New Yorkers in the first 11 months of 2025 through tenant outreach, casework, and live-call support.

- Conducting outreach to 80,000 tenants following the end of the [eviction moratorium](#) to ensure access to rights and available protections.
- Establishing the [Tenant Helpline](#) as a permanent live-call service and connecting with New Yorkers on over 160,000 calls since its launch.
- Supporting the placement of more than 13,000 voucher holders experiencing homelessness into permanent housing through the [Home Support Unit](#).
- Reaching out to more than 11,000 homeowners eligible for [lien sale intervention](#) in 2025—helping 97% avoid inclusion on the lien sale list.
- Leading an [Illegal Lockouts Day of Action](#), mobilizing outreach teams across the city to educate tenants about their rights and how to fight unlawful evictions.

Tenant Spotlight

Vincent, a lifelong New Yorker, faced displacement after falling behind on rent following his father's passing. PEU Outreach Specialist Michael Loi helped him enroll in the [Rent Freeze program](#), organize required documents, and connect to additional supports. "Michael guided me through everything," Vincent said. "Without Rent Freeze, I could not have made it. It saved my home."

UNIQUE PARTNERSHIPS

PEU's work this year was amplified by strategic partnerships that allowed us to reach New Yorkers in new places, new languages, and on new platforms. By teaming up with trusted civic organizations, digital platforms, and creators, we expanded the visibility of tenant protections, benefits access, and essential city programs—ensuring that help reaches people where they already are.

Key Highlights Include:

- Producing 2 [WeSpeakNYC](#) videos that help English language learners understand and access key government programs.
- Partnering with [OpenIgloo](#) to share information about the NYC Heat Law and illegal lockouts through website content, social media, TikTok LIVE events, and email marketing—reaching more than 200,000 viewers.
- Earning national recognition with the [GovEx Award](#) for PEU's model that bridges digital tools and human support to connect New Yorkers to life-changing benefits.

Partner Spotlight

Through our [partnership with LinkNYC](#), PEU shared multilingual public service announcements more than 4 million times across 2,200 kiosks located near shelters, NYCHA developments, and other high-need areas. This collaboration ensured that information about tenant protections, healthcare enrollment, and emergency assistance reached New Yorkers who may not engage

with traditional media, keeping vital resources visible and accessible citywide.

ABOUT THE MAYOR'S PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT UNIT

The Mayor's Public Engagement Unit (PEU) is New York City's frontline outreach team, dedicated to proactively connecting residents to benefits, tenant protections, housing supports, and other critical public services. Through neighborhood canvassing, targeted outreach, community partnerships, and one-on-one case management, PEU helps New Yorkers navigate City programs and overcome barriers to access. Working across all five boroughs and in close collaboration with community organizations and agency partners, PEU brings government directly into New York's neighborhoods—where people live, work, and raise their families.

Learn more at nyc.gov/peu.
