

What's New at PEU



February 2025

NYC Mayor's Public Engagement Unit

Hello neighbors and friends –

As Black History Month comes to an end, we recognize the deep legacy of activism, leadership, and community-building that has shaped New York City. At PEU, our mission is rooted in the same principles of engagement and empowerment that Black leaders have championed for generations. This month on our social media channels, we uplifted the contributions of PEU's Black staff members who exemplify excellence in public service and continue to drive change in our communities ([check out this video from our team!](#)).

Across our teams, PEU works every day to connect New Yorkers with vital resources and services. Our commitment to engaging, mobilizing, and empowering Black communities remains at the heart of everything we do. This Black History Month, we honored not only the history of resilience and activism but also the individuals who carry that legacy forward today.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Let's continue working together to uplift and support Black communities across our city.

In a New York state of mind 🗽,
[The Public Engagement Unit](#)

Top Resources We're Sharing this Month

1. [Access Benefits in NYC](#): There are over 70 programs available to help New Yorkers save time and money, but many people are unaware of them. Thousands of people are still eligible, leaving many programs underused. [Following a campaign launch last year](#), our team is conducting outreach days of action every Saturday to connect New Yorkers to resources. [Learn more about money-saving resources here.](#)
2. [Housing Information Classes](#): The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) provides information on a variety of housing issues to tenants,

homeowners, and property managers in New York City. Classes include “Tenants: Know Your Rights,” “Housing Court: What to Expect,” and “Owning a Home in NYC.” The classes are free, led by experts, and held virtually on Zoom. Please visit the [session topics here for descriptions](#).

3. [Good Cause Eviction](#): Under the new Good Cause Eviction law, more New Yorkers have the right to continue living in their homes without fear of unreasonable eviction or extreme rent increases. In many situations, tenants of market-rate housing will now be covered by more expansive protections. Learn more about Good Cause Eviction on the [Tenant Protection Cabinet's new informational website](#).



Program Spotlight: Helping NYC Families Access Free Early Childhood Education

For many families in New York City, finding high-quality, affordable childcare can feel overwhelming. That's why the Public Engagement Unit (PEU) is here to help: the 3-K and Pre-K application period for the 2025-2026 school year is open now through February 28, 2025, for children born in 2021 or 2022.

To ensure every child gets the best start, PEU is launching a large-scale, peer-to-peer texting campaign, reaching thousands of families with free and low-cost early childhood education options. Our outreach specialists are contacting families to help them navigate the application process for 3-K, Pre-K, Extended Day/Year, and Head Start programs. No matter your income or immigration status, your child deserves access to quality early learning.

With the application deadline fast approaching, PEU is making sure families do not miss out on these life-changing opportunities. We're working together to remove enrollment barriers, expand access to early childhood education, and help New York City's youngest learners succeed.

In addition to digital outreach, PEU will support enrollment events across all five boroughs this month to help families who need assistance completing their applications in MySchools.

Don't wait—apply for a 3-K or Pre-K seat today! Visit [MySchools.nyc](https://www.myschools.nyc.gov), stop by a [Family Welcome Center](#), or call 718-935-2009 for assistance in multiple languages.

To learn more about NYC's 3-k and pre-k programs, visit nyc.gov/3k and nyc.gov/pk.



PE-Who? ★ Staff Spotlight

Meet Afiya Earle, a Specialist on our [Tenant Helpline Team](#). The Helpline supports tenants facing eviction, harassment, and repair issues, connecting them with resources and guidance to maintain stable housing.

Q: Can you share an experience that made a big impact on a project or a New Yorker?

A: I helped a tenant with a CityFEPS housing voucher who was facing eviction after her landlord sold the property. She couldn't get help updating her voucher for a new apartment and was panicking with two

kids at risk of homelessness. Using a contact list from a recent training, I flagged her case with supervisors at HomeBase. Within 48 hours, she had an appointment to update her voucher—something she was previously told would take six months. She later told me, "I don't know what you did, but I have an appointment in two days." That moment stayed with me. It was my small, big win that changed her life.

Q: What inspired you to join the team, and what do you enjoy most about your role?

A: I was referred by a former supervisor who told me I'd be a good fit. I love helping people and giving them tools to move forward so they don't feel stuck. My coworkers and I collaborate constantly, and I enjoy working with tenants in their time of need.

Q: What are you currently working on?

A: I'm supporting the HRA INFOLINE initiative, helping tenants navigate eviction issues while explaining how to access financial assistance through other programs like one-shot deals.



About PEU

The NYC Public Engagement Unit (PEU) uses community organizing principles to re-envision how the city provides services to its most vulnerable communities. Rather than expecting constituents to navigate a complex city bureaucracy to get the help they need, PEU adopts grassroots tactics to meet residents where they are — at their doors and on their phones, in their social media feeds, and in their communities. PEU combines this proactive outreach with comprehensive case management, and in doing so, builds long-term relationships between New Yorkers and their government.