

# DEPARTMENT OF RECORDS & INFORMATION SERVICES

Pauline Toole, Commissioner



## WHAT WE DO

The mission of the Department of Records and Information Services (DORIS) is to foster civic life by preserving and providing access to the historical and contemporary records of New York City government. To achieve this, the Department ensures that City records are properly maintained following professional archival and record management practices and makes materials available to diverse communities both online and in person.

The Department's website provides the public with access to more than 10.2 million digitized items including historical photographs, maps, and documents. The Department hosts a growing online collection of more than 56,000 reports and publications issued by City agencies. Additionally, the Historical Vital Records (HVR) platform provides free online access to 10.3 million high-quality copies of historical birth, death and marriage records. The Municipal Archives and Municipal Library (Library) staff annually respond to more than 34,000 reference requests and provide the public and City agencies access to approximately 185,000 cubic feet and 305 terabytes of historical City records and photographs, as well as a collection of more than 400,000 books, government reports, studies and other publications. Approximately 77 percent of the archival holdings require preservation work and the Conservation Unit oversees the necessary rehousing, conservation treatments and other specialized measures.

The Department's Municipal Records Management Division develops and administers the City government's records management policies, operates records storage facilities, provides records management services to 65 government entities and oversees the government's transition to digital records management. The Electronic Records Management System (ERMS), launched in Fiscal 2022, enables agencies to retrieve and dispose of records in electronic format. Currently, there are 30 agencies using the system, which manages more than 161 million records.

## FOCUS ON EQUITY

The records of City government serve critical functions—recording government decisions, showing interactions between residents and policymakers, and documenting the lives of individual New Yorkers. A focus on identifying previously hidden collections, repairing such records, and inventorying and digitizing them allows the Department to equitably and thoroughly document the history of City governance.

The Department is dedicated to fostering a working environment that is equitable, diverse, and inclusive. It is also committed to ensuring access to its services for all individuals and to actively identifying, preventing and eliminating barriers to its resources. The Department continues to share knowledge of the histories and cultures of the City's extraordinarily diverse population as reflected in the collections of the Municipal Archives and Municipal Library. During Fiscal 2025, the Department employed a City Service Corps member who designed, promoted and implemented a project using volunteers to transcribe and make accessible historical records of thousands of enslaved New Yorkers dating from 1660 to 1827.

DORIS focuses on projects that showcase the relevance and diversity of City government's records. In Fiscal 2025, the Department continued to promote its storytelling initiative, the Neighborhood Stories project, which gathers and permanently preserves the stories of New York City community members—connecting local history with City government records that are maintained in the collections of the Municipal Archives and Library. In collaboration with the New Amsterdam History Center, the Department opened an exhibit, "New Visions of Old New York," featuring an interactive 3-D map and 17th-century records from the Municipal Archives. The display illustrates how the lives of women, enslaved people, and Native Americans shaped the culture of the Dutch West India Company settlement that became New York City. The Department launched an interactive City map that provides online access to biographical and background information about persons or entities honored with more than 2,500 co-named streets, intersections, parks and playgrounds across the five boroughs.

The Department strives to consider equity not only in actions to preserve and make available the historical and contemporary records of City government, but also in its public programming and events. The Department continued the popular "Lunch and Learn" webinar series with monthly programs featuring speakers who examined Municipal Archives and Library collections to inform their research. Program highlights included the history of domestic terrorism and political radicalism in the 1960s and '70s, a discussion about how Caribbean-American mutual aid societies shaped immigrant life and identity, and the story of the battle to preserve the iconic theater, Radio City Music Hall. Other programs focused on important figures in New York City history, including the nineteenth-century photographer Alice Austen, City Council President and politician Paul O'Dwyer, antebellum-era tabloid sensation Mary Jones, whose 1836 felony case made visible the City's Black transgender community, and James McCune Smith and Henry Highland Garnet, two Black New Yorkers who came of age and into freedom as the country struggled to grow from a slave-holding society to one aspiring toward freedom. The Department also hosted Gordon Davis, a former Department of Parks and Recreation Commissioner in the Mayor Dinkins administration, for a National Public Radio "Person, Place, and Thing" broadcast.

## OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

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### **SERVICE 1 Preserve and provide access to historical and contemporary New York City government records.**

- Goal 1a Increase the volume and availability of historical and contemporary New York City government records.
  - Goal 1b Promptly reply to information and reproduction service requests.
  - Goal 1c Ensure historical records are preserved according to archival standards.
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### **SERVICE 2 Provide City agencies, non-federal courts and district attorneys with record storage, retrieval and record management services.**

- Goal 2a Retrieve records promptly from off-site facilities upon record owner's request.
- Goal 2b Promptly transfer eligible agency records to off-site storage.
- Goal 2c Dispose of all records according to their scheduled retention period.

# HOW WE PERFORMED IN FISCAL 2025

## SERVICE 1 Preserve and provide access to historical and contemporary New York City government records.

**Goal 1a** Increase the volume and availability of historical and contemporary New York City government records.

The Municipal Library acquired 8,961 publications during Fiscal 2025, an increase of 63 percent from the 5,497 items acquired during Fiscal 2024. The greater volume this fiscal year is attributable to digitized copies of the City Record—the official daily journal of New York City—dated from 1873 to 1899 that were added to the Government Publications Portal (Portal). A non-government entity digitized the periodical and provided copies of the digital files to the Department for publication in the Portal. An on-going project, digital copies of the City Record from 1900 to 1943 will be added to the Portal in Fiscal 2026.

During Fiscal 2025, the Department published 14 resource records compared to 5 in Fiscal 2024. Resource records provide the public with detailed information about Municipal Archives collections. Deployment of staff to develop collection descriptions led to the increased volume of resource record publications in Fiscal 2025.

In Fiscal 2025, the number of items digitized increased 342 percent from 103,499 during Fiscal 2024 to 457,846. In the previous fiscal year digitization staff had been temporarily reassigned to prepare collection descriptions for entry into Preservica, a digital preservation and access platform. Digitization productivity resumed in Fiscal 2025 and was augmented by the completion of a project to digitize the 1890 census. The volume of records accessioned to the Municipal Archives increased significantly from 117 cubic feet in Fiscal 2024 to 1,624 cubic feet in Fiscal 2025. The bulk of the accessions consist of “Stop and Frisk” records from the New York City Police Department. These records will be available to the public after archival processing is completed.

The Department’s public events continue to grow in number and popularity, and in Fiscal 2025 program attendance grew 86 percent rising from 1,687 in Fiscal 2024 to 3,144 attendees. This is the highest number of attendees at DORIS public programming since the Department began reporting it in Fiscal 2013. Additionally, the number of unique visitors to the Department’s website increased 76 percent to more than 1.2 million visitors in Fiscal 2025. This is more than double the number of visitors measured in Fiscal 2021, demonstrating the benefit of increased accessibility through digitization.

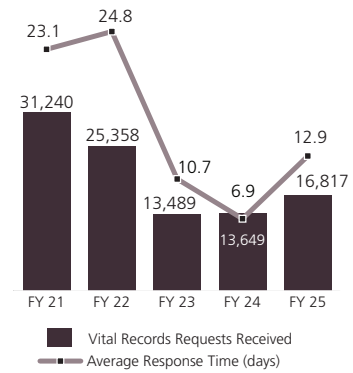
Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	5-Year	Desired Direction
Municipal library items available	389,189	394,542	397,272	402,615	411,576	*	*	Neutral	Up
Municipal Archives resource records	NA	NA	5	5	14	*	*	NA	Up
Publications and reports acquired	5,055	5,353	4,677	5,497	8,961	*	*	Up	Up
Required agency reports submitted to the Municipal Library publications portal (%)	40%	67%	54%	62%	62%	80%	80%	Up	Up
Records accessioned by Municipal Archives (cubic ft.)	111	330	280	117	1,624	*	*	Up	Up
Digital archival records accessioned (terabytes)	0.0012	44.5100	0.1000	0.0000	0.0000	*	*	Down	Up
★ Records digitized	2,285,564	187,329	126,505	103,499	457,846	↑	↑	Down	Up
Attendees at DORIS public programs	1,031	2,088	1,803	1,687	3,144	*	*	Up	Up
Visits made to agency walk-in facilities	0	1,333	1,653	2,036	2,158	*	*	Up	*
Unique visitors to agency website and related online platforms (000)	591.70	745.63	824.28	692.88	1,216.74	*	*	Up	Up

★ Critical Indicator    ● Equity Indicator    “NA” Not Available    ↑↓ Directional Target    \* None

**Goal 1b** Promptly reply to information and reproduction service requests.

Compared to Fiscal 2024, vital records requests received rose 23 percent to 16,817 and photographic reproduction requests received fell 40 percent to 1,193. The average time for the Department to respond to requests for copies of vital records increased 87 percent in Fiscal 2025 to 12.9 days compared to 6.9 days in Fiscal 2024, and the proportion of vital record requests responded to within 12 business days decreased 17 percentage points. The average time to respond to requests for copies of historical photographs more than doubled in Fiscal 2025 to 4.4 days compared to 2 days. The diminished performance is due to the temporary reassignment of a staff member in the vital record and photo production unit to fill a critical vacancy in Administration. The re-assigned staff member will return to vital record and photo production in early Fiscal 2026 and the Department expects performance to recover over the course of the fiscal year.

**Vital Records Requests and Time to Respond**



Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	5-Year	Desired Direction
Vital record requests received	31,240	25,358	13,489	13,649	16,817	*	*	Down	*
★ Average response time to vital record requests (days)	23.1	24.8	10.7	6.9	12.9	10.0	10.0	Down	Down
★ Vital record requests responded to within 12 business days (%)	65%	46%	77%	91%	74%	75%	75%	Up	Up
Photographic reproduction requests received	3,656	3,238	1,746	1,988	1,193	*	*	Down	Up
★ Average response time to historical photo requests (days)	5.8	5.4	5.4	2.0	4.4	12.0	12.0	Down	Down
Information requests received	39,937	37,971	29,891	31,130	34,636	*	*	Down	Up
Municipal Archives and Municipal Library patron services (hours)	NA	1,778	2,208	2,217	2,186	*	*	NA	Up
★ Critical Indicator    ● Equity Indicator    "NA" Not Available    ⬆️⬆️ Directional Target    * None									

**Goal 1c** Ensure historical records are preserved according to archival standards.

The number of preservation actions performed during Fiscal 2025 decreased 27 percent to 12,497 as compared to 17,151 in Fiscal 2024. The employment contract of a conservator for the grant-funded Brooklyn Bridge drawings preservation project ended in December 2024, resulting in diminished activity for the remainder of the Fiscal Year.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Preservation actions performed	21,596	8,145	20,262	17,151	12,497	*	*	Down	*
★ Critical Indicator    ● Equity Indicator    "NA" Not Available    ⬆️⬆️ Directional Target    * None									

**SERVICE 2 Provide City agencies, non-federal courts and district attorneys with record storage, retrieval and record management services.**

**Goal 2a** Retrieve records promptly from off-site facilities upon record owner's request.

The Department's retrieval rate for records from the off-site facilities upon owner-agency requests, and the proportion of requests for stored records processed within 48 hours remained fairly consistent at 1.5 days and 80 percent, respectively, in Fiscal 2025, compared to 1.5 days and 85 percent in Fiscal 2024.

The total volume of records disposed by City government entities increased a substantial 632 percent during Fiscal 2025, to 74,968 cubic feet, compared to 10,237 in Fiscal 2024. The significantly improved performance is due to the Department’s ongoing efforts to streamline the disposal process and assist client City agencies with disposal of obsolete records in order to reduce rising costs associated with storage in commercial facilities.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Average response time to agency requests for inactive records (days)	0.6	1.0	1.4	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	Up	Down
Requests for stored records processed within 48 hours (%)	87.6%	91.6%	96.0%	85.0%	80.0%	*	*	Neutral	Up
Agencies managing records in electronic format using the Electronic Records Management System (cumulative)	NA	NA	32	32	30	*	*	NA	Up
Records disposed by City government entities (cubic ft.)	14,801	6,563	10,720	10,237	74,968	*	*	Up	Up
★ Critical Indicator      ● Equity Indicator      “NA” Not Available      ⇅ Directional Target      * None									

**Goal 2b** Promptly transfer eligible agency records to off-site storage.

During Fiscal 2025, the quantity of records transferred into the Municipal Records Center, and offsite storage facility, decreased 87 percent to 706 cubic feet, compared to 5,634 during Fiscal 2024. The Department reduced the volume of record transfers from client City agencies in anticipation of planned reconstruction of shelving units in the Municipal Records Center.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	5-Year	Desired Direction
Records transferred into Municipal Records Center (cubic ft. )	487	7,820	4,624	5,634	706	*	*	Down	Up
★ Storage capacity available for new accessions in Municipal Records Center (%)	19%	19%	19%	19%	21%	*	*	Neutral	*
★ Critical Indicator      ● Equity Indicator      “NA” Not Available      ⇅ Directional Target      * None									

**Goal 2c** Dispose of all records according to their scheduled retention period.

During Fiscal 2025, the volume of records disposed by the Department from the Municipal Records Center and its other storage sites decreased 28 percent to 14,036 cubic feet, compared to 19,430 cubic feet in Fiscal 2024. The Fiscal 2024 volume was due to a one-time disposal of a large quantity of Civil Court records. Reductions in staff at the Record Center during Fiscal 2025 also impacted the quantity of records disposed. During Fiscal 2026 the Department anticipates processing an increased volume of Court and District Attorney record disposal applications.

The Department’s efforts to streamline and facilitate the disposal process led to a 55 percent decrease in the average time between record disposal eligibility and applications sent by client agency to the New York City Law Department, from 1.3 months in Fiscal 2024 to 0.6 months in Fiscal 2025. The average time for the Law Department to process disposal applications decreased 42 percent from 3.7 months in Fiscal 2024 to 2.1 months in Fiscal 2025.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Average time between records disposal eligibility and application sent to Law Department (months)	0.2	0.2	0.7	1.3	0.6	2.0	2.0	Up	Down
★ Average time for Law Department to approve records disposal application (months)	1.9	NA	1.3	3.7	2.1	3.0	3.0	NA	Down
Records disposed by DORIS from Municipal Records Center and its other storage sites (cubic ft.)	6,059	3,540	4,322	19,430	14,036	*	*	Up	Up
★ Critical Indicator      ● Equity Indicator      “NA” Not Available      ⇅ Directional Target      * None									

## AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	5-Year	Desired Direction
Customer Experience									
Letters responded to within 14 days (%)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	*	*	Neutral	Up
E-mails responded to within 14 days (%)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	*	*	Neutral	Up
CORE facility rating	NA	100	100	100	100	*	*	NA	Up
★ Critical Indicator      ● Equity Indicator      "NA" Not Available      ⇅ Directional Target      * None									

## AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual <sup>1</sup>					Plan <sup>2</sup>		5yr Trend
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY25	FY26	
Expenditures (\$000,000) <sup>3</sup>	\$11.0	\$12.4	\$14.2	\$13.5	\$15.5	\$15.3	\$15.2	Up
Revenues (\$000,000)	\$0.8	\$0.7	\$0.6	\$0.7	\$0.7	\$0.9	\$0.9	Neutral
Personnel	61	58	58	58	58	55	54	Down
Overtime paid (\$000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	Neutral
<sup>1</sup> Actual financial amounts for the current fiscal year are not yet final. Final fiscal year actuals, from the Comptroller's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, will be reported in the next PMMR. Refer to the "Indicator Definitions" at <a href="http://nyc.gov/mmr">nyc.gov/mmr</a> for details. <sup>2</sup> Authorized Budget Level <sup>3</sup> Expenditures include all funds      "NA" - Not Available      * None								

## SPENDING AND BUDGET INFORMATION

Where possible, the relationship between an agency's goals and its expenditures and planned resources, by budgetary unit of appropriation (UA), is shown in the 'Applicable MMR Goals' column. Each relationship is not necessarily exhaustive or exclusive. Any one goal may be connected to multiple UAs, and any UA may be connected to multiple goals.

Unit of Appropriation	Expenditures FY24 <sup>1</sup> (\$000,000)	Modified Budget FY25 <sup>2</sup> (\$000,000)	Applicable MMR Goals <sup>3</sup>
100 - Personal Services	\$4.6	\$5.1	All
200 - Other Than Personal Services	\$8.9	\$10.5	All
Agency Total	\$13.5	\$15.5	
<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2024. Includes all funds. <sup>2</sup> City of New York Adopted Budget for Fiscal 2025, as of June 2025. Includes all funds. <sup>3</sup> Refer to agency goals listed at front of chapter.      "NA" Not Available      * None			

## NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- In Goal 1a, the indicator 'Library items available' was updated to 'Municipal library items available' to enhance clarity.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on the agency, please visit: [www.nyc.gov/records](http://www.nyc.gov/records).