

Keith Kerman, NYC Chief Fleet Officer, Remarks

Vision Zero Back to School Announcement, 9/9/21

Hi. My name is Keith Kerman. I'm the Chief Fleet Officer of the City of New York and a Deputy Commissioner at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS).

I want to thank our partner agencies here today, DOT, NYPD, TLC, DOHMH, the Mayor's Office, the Assembly, and the City Council. Vision Zero is a terrific partnership and collaboration among agencies who really care and are working together to make a difference.

I'm a long time City civil servant, in the later stages of my third decade. Most importantly, I'm a parent of two school age children. We're back to school, in-person, and it's exciting.

But I know what's it like to have speeding drivers rushing by the school or running the red light in front of our children. I've screamed at many a driver. We warn our children constantly to watch out for reckless drivers. It's drivers who need to be watching out for our kids.

NYC operates a large and visible fleet. We support 50 agencies and 80,000 fleet operators. Sanitation, Police, Fire, Parks, DOT, DEP vehicles are throughout the City, providing critical public services.

From DCAS, we call on all City employees to set the example. Slow down near schools and in general. Make September, Slowtember on the roads.

To City employees, I assure you, if you drive safely and responsibly, your work will all still get done as needed. Your work won't get done if you hit someone.

Through our Safe Fleet Transition Plan, we are doing a lot to design safer vehicles and to complement DOT's great work at re-designing the roadways. We have introduced telematics tracking, automatic braking, backup cameras, pedestrian alerts, high-vision trucks, and truck side-guards. We have put in place over 65,000 safety enhancements in just the last few years.

Truck side-guards are a simple fix that will keep kids, bicyclists, and pedestrians from being killed by the back wheel of a truck during a turn. They are mandated in Europe but still too rare here. NYC Fleet has already put in place the nation's largest truck side-guard program. And, today, the City Council will vote to expand the side-guard initiative to City contractors. We applaud that effort.

Street and vehicle design is important. In the end, though, it still comes down to the responsibility, care, and caution of each driver.

Do the right thing. Every driver, every car, every mile. Keep New Yorkers and our kids safe.

Welcome back to school.

--DOT Announcement

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dcas/downloads/pdf/fleet/NYC-DOT-Speed-Camera-Annoucement-September-2021.pdf>