

# The Sixth Borough Dispatch

Philadelphian in New York City

April 2026

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## 100 Days of Mamdani

[In a poll conducted](#) just before Mamdani's 100th day in office, the public had roughly a 48% approval of the mayor, with 30% disapproving and 23% unsure how to rate his performance. Researchers stated that "Mamdani is also perceived as being likeable, hard working, caring, a good leader, and representing all New York City residents." Most adults say they believe the city is moving in the right direction. Many perceive that Mamdani is fulfilling his campaign promises. Comparably, Mayor Eric Adams had a 61% approval in the days leading up to his first 100 days.

59% of New Yorkers believe that Mamdani has the right balance of collaboration with the President, and 60% believe that of his relationship with Gov Hochul

Mayor Mamdani also [gave a speech](#) reflecting on his first 100 days, focusing on his achievements thus far, his priorities in the near future, and socialism.

Mamdani highlighted many of his main accomplishments during these first 100 days. One of his major accomplishments thus far has been working towards implementing universal child care. This has manifested in inviting 2,000 children for free 2-K and 3-K programs in the city. This was possible through a \$1.2 billion partnership with Governor Hochul.

Affordability is also a major issue in NYC that Mamdani is attempting to tackle. He mentions that the city has won over \$34 million in settlements and related fees for tenants, has repaired 6,000 apartments, and has issued nearly 200,000 violation notices. Some other policies include: improving worker and consumer conditions, reducing hidden fees, and improving public safety. For public safety, Mamdani stated that crime is down across the city. Mamdani also mentioned a focus on the "small" issues, including road maintenance and repairing potholes. Lastly, Mamdani also announced his plan to open city-owned grocery stores.

Mamdani also announced a few priorities going forward, including one that was not mentioned during his campaign. Mamdani stated he wants to work to make buses faster and reduce commute times. He says that he will work with Hochul to make this happen. Even though this was not part of his campaign, he announced his plan to implement trash containerization across all boroughs.

Mamdani has gained public notoriety for being a Democratic Socialist, which many Americans see as being antithetical to American politics or simply ineffective. Mamdani acknowledged these concerns and doubts in his speech, yet he also refuted these claims by stating that socialists can successfully advance their policy agendas, be fiscally responsible, and provide good public services. Mamdani invoked the memory of Mayor Hone of Milwaukee, stating that he had built the best public park system in the US and weathered the Great Depression better than most other American cities. Mamdani also stated that even though many believe socialism does not work because of the sheer amount of money it requires, he is actively working to reduce NYC's massive budget deficit, which has remained high during the Adams administration, while also implementing his policies.

CBS News also [held an interview](#) with Mamdani regarding his first 100 days. Mayor Mamdani stated that one of his best moments was announcing the changes to childcare with Governor Hochul and that his worst moment was managing the blizzards this winter. Mamdani also stated he was surprised about how much he could do as mayor, and also how important it is to pursue not only the big things but also the little things.

Mamdani has seen various changes to his relationships with high-profile individuals this month too. Mamdani has [received some criticism](#) after posting a video on social media that targeted Citadel's CEO Ken Griffin, the leader of one of the largest hedge fund firms in the world. In the video, Mamdani commented that Griffin would have to pay increased taxes under the new pied-a-terre tax policy (mentioned below). Citadel had been planning a redevelopment project at 350 Park Ave, which would create 6,000 construction jobs and 15,000 permanent jobs in Midtown. Citadel's COO Gerald Beeson expressed sadness that Mamdani implied Citadel doesn't contribute its fair share to NYC, especially in light of its development plan and the \$2.3 billion it pays annually in city and state taxes. Other political analysts stated that these activities will continue to push companies to move to other states.

Mamdani also has shifting relations with the current president and former president Obama. In April, [Obama and Mamdani joined together](#) for a reading session for toddlers at a Pre-K center in the Bronx. Obama and Mamdani's relationship is building even after Mamdani called Obama "evil" in 2013.

On the other hand, even after a strong start to his relationship with President Trump, Mamdani's relationship with Trump [has been strained](#) since Trump accused Mamdani of "destroying New York." These remarks came after Mamdani announced the pied-a-terre tax that would apply to Trump's residence in NYC. The comments came a day after Mamdani stated his relationship with Trump is "honest, direct, and productive."



### Down the Pothole!

Find additional information below in Section 1

## The Grocery Store War

As mentioned later in the policy updates section, the City-Owned Grocery Store plan is beginning. As a highly controversial policy, [many different voices are discussing it](#). Let's take a look:

1. The United Bodegas of America is critical of the policy. They believe working with the bodegas in the city to make it more feasible to lower prices would do more to lower prices than creating 5 city-run grocery stores. They believe that these city stores, due to their role as subsidized competition, will cause more harm than the benefits the stores could provide. They stated that Bodegas are not charging people excessive amounts for additional profits, as Bodegas make small profits as is.
2. On the other hand, residents are paying high prices to afford groceries or traveling far from their neighborhoods to find reasonable prices. Many of these residents are excited about the construction of these stores. Several [council members also support](#) the policy's implementation, as it will hopefully help residents to better afford groceries.
3. Mr. Cohen at SUNY states that it is essential for the city to understand what the community needs, what people want to buy, and what must be cheaper.

# Budget

## City Council vs. Mayor

There is a [large disagreement](#) between Mayor Mamdani and the City Council on how to reduce the budget deficit. As previously mentioned in these reports, Mamdani has proposed raising property taxes and using the city's reserves, also known as rainy day funds. On the other hand, the council argues that re-estimates and spending cuts are the better path forward.

Mamdani had [previously criticized](#) the City Council for its proposal to have \$6 billion in savings. This proposal focused on the City Council reviewing the budget and finding areas where funds could be saved. An example is finding budgeted funds for city employee wages for which no one was hired for the position. According to the City Council Speaker, this could save \$860 million.

The City Council Speaker, Julie Menin, has stated [she will not raise the property tax rate](#). She stated raising the rate would hurt Black communities and small businesses. Mamdani responded, stating that this would lead to service cuts.

On the other hand, the Speaker and Mamdani agree on Gov. Hochul's pied-a-terre tax, which serves as a surcharge on homes worth over \$5 million owned by non-NYC residents. The Speaker has stated she supports progressive taxation, but that the issue needs to be addressed at the federal level; otherwise, companies will move to other states to avoid higher tax rates.



### **Down the Pothole!**

Find additional information below in Section 2

# Policy Tracking

## Childcare

### Background

According to Mamdani's policy publications, the highest cost that New Yorkers experience after rent is childcare. This problem has become so large that it is forcing people to move away from the city.

Additionally, because many families in NYC lack access to affordable childcare, this leads to job interruptions, being let go, or not being able to accept promotions due to the additional responsibility of caring for the child in lieu of childcare.

In comparison to the rest of the country, New York City has a high maternal mortality rate. Most of these deaths are considered preventable.

### Campaign Promises

Mamdani has pledged to implement free childcare for every child in New York aged 6 weeks to 5 years, increase wages for childcare workers, and provide new parents with a collection of essentials and information.

### Previous Policy Changes

In February, Mamdani held discussions with current childcare service providers to gather information valuable for implementing his policies. He also began to invite new childcare providers to expand childcare services in NYC.

In March, Mamdani planned to expand the Nurse Home Visit Program with Governor Hochul. Together, they also announced the beginning of free 2-K and 3-K in NYC.

### April Policy Changes

#### Childcare Resources

Mayor Mamdani [announced a new childcare map](#) and resource center that helps families find, understand, and choose childcare programs for their household needs. On the website, users can filter the site by location, age group, and cost. Often, New Yorkers rely on time-consuming methods to find appropriate childcare. The map was developed with feedback from parents and includes clear instructions, a questionnaire to help parents identify providers, information about each childcare program, and live support services.

#### Expanded Childcare Hours

Mamdani [announced that most of the city's 2-k program will operate on a full-day and full-year schedule](#), meaning from 8am to 6pm 260 days a year, compared to the previous 180-day calendar. The hope is that this will allow parents to better balance childcare and work responsibilities.

#### New Commissioner of the Administration of Children's Services

Mamdani has also [nominated Rebecca Jones Gaston](#) as the new Commissioner of the Administration of Children's Services. Ms. Gaston previously served as a senior Biden Administration official as the commissioner for

the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families in the Department of Health and Human Services.

## City-Owned Grocery Stores

### Background

According to Mamdani's policy publications, almost 90% of New Yorkers say groceries are costing a larger amount of their income.

### Campaign Promises

Mamdani has pledged to make a network of city-owned grocery stores that will keep prices low and not make a profit. The store operators will not have to pay rent or property taxes, and will also buy and sell at wholesale prices, and centralize warehousing and distribution, which should lead to savings being passed to customers.

### Previous Policy Changes

There have not been any previous policy changes to work toward this campaign promise.

### April Policy Changes

#### Announcement

Mamdani [announced](#) that the first of five city-run grocery stores will be built in La Marqueta, East Harlem. It will open in 2029, with the rest of the stores opening in 2029. The stores will work by subsidizing a set of staples. It will be run by a private operator, but that operator will have to follow the standards set by the city, including cheaper bread and eggs. The stores will not stock items like tobacco or lottery tickets so as not to take business from the nearby bodega owners, where those products are popular.

## Supporting Homeowners

### Background

A fourth of NYC homeowners spend over half of their income on housing. Additionally, according to Mamdani, the property tax system favors wealthy homeowners, and the tax lien sale systems leads to the loss of homes for families. Deed theft is also contributing to families losing their homes.

### Campaign Promises

Mamdani will create a new Office of Deed Theft Prevention, change the property tax system, end the tax lien sale, and help homeowners comply with Local Law 97.

### Previous Policy Changes

There have been no previous policy changes.

### April Policy Changes

Mamdani [announced](#) the new Office of Deed Theft Prevention. The leader of this agency will be Peter White, who is an attorney helping homeowners fight foreclosure. The initial budget for the office will be \$1 million. Deed Theft has gained prominence from scammers trying to seize valuable property from its owners.



### Down the Pothole!

Find additional information below in Section 3

# Affordable Housing

## Background

For various reasons, including New York City encouraging private developers to construct new buildings with “luxury” apartments geared toward the wealthy, there is a shortage of affordable housing. For this reason and increasing rent prices, many residents cannot afford rent.

## Campaign Promises

Under Mamdani's plan, 200,000 units of "affordable housing" are scheduled to be built over a ten-year period. The plan calls for all of these units to be designated as "rent-stabilized apartments." Additionally, Mamdani has stated he will freeze the rent for rent-stabilized units in NYC.

## Previous Policy Changes

In February, Mamdani launched the "Timball Terrace" project, providing 341 residential units.

In March, Mamdani announced the “Neighborhood Builders Fast Track,” a program to accelerate the construction of affordable housing on city-managed land.

## April Policy Changes

### No Rent Freeze Yet

In April, the New York City Rent Guidelines Board [met to discuss](#) a possible price hike for New Yorkers living in rent-stabilized units. The ability to change the prices of these units lies solely with this board. Six of these members were appointed by Mayor Mamdani. At this meeting, the board released its 2026 Income and Expense study, which showed that landlords’ net income for rent-stabilized buildings rose 5.3%, but landlords explained that their expenses also went up.

One major concern is that while the board approves rent increases each year, people’s salaries are not increasing.



### Down the Pothole!

Find additional information below in Section 4

# DOWN THE POTHOLE!

## Additional Insights to Learn About American Government

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### Why are Mamdani's and Adams' approval ratings so different?

While hard to measure this exactly, [there are some arguments](#) for why this is occurring. Mamdani is a highly divisive mayor while Adams was not. This means that Adams has an inherently higher “popularity ceiling” than Adams. A popularity ceiling is basically the maximum approval someone can get based on certain barriers. For Mamdani, his barriers are more numerous due to being a socialist, highly progressive, his religion, and a more polarizing individual, among others. Adams was not polarizing to this extent, although he did become the most unpopular mayor in NYC history by the end of his term.

It's actually possible to see some of this effect by looking at polls that ask if “the city is moving in the right direction.” Compared to October 2025 when Adams was leaving office, Mamdani has a higher rating for this prompt. This shows that people are more optimistic about the city itself under Mamdani than under Adams. Of course, it's necessary to take into consideration that people were so unhappy with Adams that just having a new mayor could lead to a bias in these responses.

### What are trash containerization policies?

[These policies](#) require that trash is stored in containers rather than plastic bags when it's placed outside for pickup. These policies help prevent litter from flying away and pests like rats and bugs.

This policy will require that everyone buys the NYC bin, which you can get at a HomeDepot or from the city if you need a larger container for larger properties. People who receive tax credits will qualify for reimbursements from the city.

### How will trash containerization be implemented and enforced?

A lot of details are currently unclear about this point. Currently, the administration is [slowly rolling out this program](#) by implementing it in one district in each borough at a time. All boroughs will be under this policy by 2031.

To enforce this policy, the city is using fines. If someone does not place their trash in a container, they will be fined \$50 for the first offense, \$100 for the second, and \$200 for 3+

### What were the challenges for childcare leading up to Mamdani?

Initially, [Mayor de Blasio rolled out universal childcare](#) for 3-K and 4-K. Mamdani is looking to add 2-K and expand current 3-K and 4-K seats by opening new centers and increasing wages for childcare workers, which will hopefully help with current staffing shortages.

Since the implementation of universal childcare during de Blasio, numbers have been trending downward in various measures. For example, the number of children enrolled remained stable even though the city was spending more on childcare, meaning costs were rising per student. Also, home-based providers fell by 60% from 2015-2023 which has impacts on accessibility for working families. Extended day seats (childcare programs that go past 9-5 to help parents get home from work) for working families declined too. Enrollment was also lower because it's more complicated to apply for extended seats than regular seats. Lastly, many providers cite low payment rates and low wages as reasons for the teacher shortages. De Blasio worked on this, but the work is incomplete.

### How does this compare to cities around the US?

NYC is considered to be the leader in implementing universal childcare in US cities, but most major cities are or have implemented universal childcare for Pre-K.

While it is impossible to discuss all examples in this small section, there are a few examples which have been discussed in the news recently.

[Notable examples include:](#) New Mexico, where they are implementing a state-wide universal childcare program that they will pay for with oil and gas revenues. Vermont, which increased taxes to pay for childcare. San Francisco is expanding free/subsidized childcare to families making up to \$310k. Philadelphia offers free Pre-K through PHLPK, which is funded by the city's sweetened beverage tax. However, a lot of cities still have long waitlists to access these programs, especially due to a shortage of childcare workers.

For a more widespread assessment, the National League of Cities mentioned in their [State of Cities report](#) that 35% of responding cities cited insufficient childcare providers as an economic challenge, and that municipal leaders recognize providing services like childcare are critical to improving workforce participation and economic development. These statistics show that childcare is an issue around the country.



**Can the City Council solely raise the property tax rate? Can the state intervene?**

Yes, City Council can [raise property tax rates](#) without state approval. The state can implement a tax cap rate, but the city is allowed to override that tax cap if 60% of city council approves it.

**What does it mean for the property tax increase issue to be addressed at the federal level?**

In this case, the city council speaker wants congress to pass a nationwide progressive taxation policy. In New York decides to raise their taxes while other states don't, this could lead to companies moving to a different state where property tax rates are lower. On the other hand, if the entire country's property tax rate was increased, this motivation would not arise.



**What are rent-stabilized units? How are they chosen?**

[Rent stabilized units](#) have stabilized annual rent hikes determined by the Rent Guidelines Board in NYC. Without rent stabilization, rent rates can fluctuate more sporadically.

The criteria for these units seems to be apartment buildings that have 6+ units and were built before 1974. This is about 50% of apartments in NYC.

**How does the city monitor that each contract follows these pricing guidelines?**

Tenants can file a "rent overcharge" complaint if they believe they are being overcharged. To check this, tenants can verify rent history information with the City, which allows the tenant to actually see if the rent is being overcharged or not.



**What is deed theft and how is it committed?**

[Deed theft](#) is when someone steals a house through forgery or fraud. In the case of forgery, a thief fakes a homeowner's signature and files with the county clerk. In the case of fraud, a homeowner signs their deed over to a thief without realizing what they are signing, usually because the thief offers them some kind of service. From 2023-2025 there was a 240% increase in complaints to the New York Attorney General. It's likely becoming more common because technology makes it easier to create and forge documents. Sometimes, this theft also occurs through identity theft, where the thief steals the identity of the homeowner.