



Labor & Employment Issues Client Alert

Pitta LLP
For Clients
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“Every record has been destroyed or falsified, every book rewritten, every picture has been repainted, every statue and street building has been renamed, every date has been altered.

And the process is continuing day by day and minute by minute. History has stopped. Nothing exists except an endless present in which the Party is always right.”

-George Orwell, 1984-

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL PASSES COVID-19 IMPACTED BUDGET

At a little past midnight on July 1, 2020, the New York City Council passed an \$88.19 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2021 by a vote of 32 to 17. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a \$9 billion revenue shortfall for New York City and forced the de Blasio administration to revise its executive budget proposal from \$95.3 billion in February to the negotiated budget of \$88.19 billion.

The budget negotiations included intense negotiations over the New York Police Department’s (“NYPD”) budget and restorations of cuts to social programs such as the Summer Youth Employment Program (“SYEP”), community food pantries, domestic and programs that provide assistance to aging New Yorkers.

The budget was partially balanced because the City tapped into \$4 billion in cash reserves and the City Council identified more than \$300 million in agency savings. New York Council Speaker Corey Johnson said “the Council came into this year’s budget negotiations laser-focused on preserving the social safety net while grappling with unprecedented revenue shortfalls.”

Much of the controversy over this year’s budget centered on cutting the budget of the NYPD with members voting against the budget for not cutting enough from NYPD’s budget while other members voted no because it cut too much.

The budget includes reducing the NYPD’s headcount by 1,163 uniform officers by eliminating two of the four NYPD classes this year, returning control of the NYPD’s School Safety to the Department of Education, removing NYPD from homeless outreach, reducing overtime spending by \$352 million and removing crossing guards from the NYPD.

Below are other highlights from the FY 2021 budget:

- **Protect Public Schools** –The Council restored \$100 million in Fair Student Funding, \$11.6 million for the Single Shepherd guidance counselors, \$4.8 million for 38 social workers, and \$1.8 million for other social-emotional supports for students. This budget also funds school health programs so that there is a school nurse for every public school building.
- **Help College Students Graduate** – The CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) will be maintained with \$34.3 million to help students stay on track and graduate. The Council also

restored \$1.7 million for the CUNY Remediation Program that helps students prepared for college course work.

- **Preserve Youth Initiatives** – The Fair Futures campaign for foster youth will receive \$2.7 million, childcare vouchers will get \$4 million, and discretionary childcare contracts will receive \$8.7 million.
- **Prevent Food Insecurity** – In addition to the \$25 million that the Council had previously negotiated to prevent food insecurity, the adopted budget will include \$8.6 million in food initiatives to ensure that New Yorkers do not go hungry.
- **Promote LGBTQIA Rights** – The budget will include \$1.8 million for the LGBTQ curriculum at the DOE and \$1 million at the City University of New York (CUNY), as well as \$1.4 million for LGBTQ senior services in every borough and \$1.9 million for Trans Equity Programs.
- **Maintain Culture and the Arts** –The budget will include \$20.2 million for cultural programs and Cultural Institutions Groups, \$14.3 million and \$1 million for the CASA and SU-CASA initiatives, respectively, and \$3.7 million for the Coalition Theaters of Color initiative.
- **Support Libraries** – The budget will include \$11.9 million to support the City’s three library systems. With this funding, the libraries will be able to maintain in programming and circulation, cover critical operating expenses, including repairs and upkeep that are not eligible for capital funds.
- **Protect Survivors of Domestic Violence** – The budget will include \$12.2 million in services to help survivors of domestic violence, a full budget restoration of the Council initiative.
- **Strengthen Small Businesses and Workers** –The budget will provide \$1.6 million to Chamber on the Go, \$3 million for Worker Coop Business Development, \$1 million for Construction Site Safety Training, and \$2.8 million for the Day Laborer Workforce Initiative.
- **Engage Our Seniors** – The budget will include \$8.4 million for senior centers, \$6.5 million for Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, and \$4 million to support Holocaust survivors.
- **Provide Housing** – The budget will include \$3.2 million for Foreclosure Prevention Programs, \$3.1 million for Community Housing Preservation Strategies, \$1.7 million for the Home Loan Program, and \$637,500 for the Community Land Trust Initiative.
- **Assist Immigrants** – COVID-19 had a disproportionate impact on many of the City’s immigrant residents, made worse by an inability to access many federal programs intended to help. The budget includes \$9.8 million for adult literacy, \$2 million for the Immigrant Health Initiative, \$4 million for unaccompanied minors and families, and \$16.6 million for the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project to be included in the budget.
- **Promote Criminal Justice** – The budget will include \$11.9 million for Alternatives to Incarceration, \$2.2 million for diversion programs, \$4.1 million to support people involved in the sex trade, \$3.2 million for the Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault, and \$2.9 million for the Crisis Management System.

**“We believe in the ideas of family, mutuality,
the sharing of benefits and burdens
for the good of all, feeling one another’s pain,
sharing one another’s blessing
recognizing that at the heart of the matter
we are bound to each other.”**

-Mario M. Cuomo-

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