



OFFICE OF FAITH & NON-PROFIT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

May 2024 Newsletter

Greetings and welcome back! Please use this newsletter for information on upcoming events, funding opportunities, and resources to ensure your organizations can thrive.

What Governor Kathy Hochul's FY2025 Budget Means for the Interfaith Community



The Budget makes major investments and reforms to improve public safety, crack down on organized retail theft, combat the rising tide of hate crimes, prevent gun violence and domestic violence, and reduce recidivism and improve reentry for formerly incarcerated individuals across New York State.

The FY 2025 Budget includes:

- **\$347 million** to continue New York's efforts to reduce and prevent gun violence.
- **\$40.2 million** to crack down on retail theft by expanding enforcement and increasing penalties for offenders who assault retail workers and a **\$3,000 tax credit** for business owners to invest in security resources.
- **\$35.8 million** to prevent and prosecute crimes of domestic violence.
- **\$35 million** to fight the rising tide of hate by expanding the number of offenses that can be prosecuted as hate crimes and investing in the Securing Communities Against Hate Grant that protects houses of worship, religious schools and other at-risk sites.
- **\$7.1 million** to reduce recidivism and improve reentry into the workforce by providing more intensive supervision of individuals on parole, expanding transitional housing opportunities, expanding college programming to all state prisons, and providing transportation for visitors to and from State Correctional Facilities.



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental health issues affect millions of New Yorkers annually, with roughly one in five reporting that they live with such a condition. Starting a conversation on mental health helps promote understanding and compassion and reassures those living with mental illness that they are not alone.

Throughout May, New York joins the nation in recognizing Mental Health Awareness Month, supporting the goals of raising awareness, reducing stigma, and providing help to guide individuals and families on the path to recovery. This week, Governor Hochul recognized May as Mental Health Awareness Month throughout New York, issuing a [proclamation](#) and highlighting the many investments her administration has made to improve the continuum of care statewide.

“Nearly every New Yorker has either experienced or known someone who has struggled with a mental health challenge,” **Governor Hochul said.** “As we mark Mental Health Awareness Month in New York, we acknowledge these struggles, commit to eliminating stigma, and renew our efforts to ensure that people are best equipped to lead happy, productive lives.”

These investments include the Governor’s landmark [\\$1 billion mental health plan](#), which is helping to build early intervention and youth programs, expanding access to certified community behavioral health clinics and housing; and providing employment incentives for mental healthcare workers. Governor Hochul also advanced legislation to improve insurance coverage for behavioral health treatment and regulations to ensure community-based hospitals and psychiatric facilities ensure the individuals they treat have the necessary supports in their community before being discharged from inpatient care.

The recently adopted [FY 2025 State Budget](#) continues Governor Hochul’s commitment to strengthening the state’s mental health care system and improving access for all New Yorkers. The budget includes \$20 million to continue expanding school-based mental health clinic satellites, \$19 million to provide critical care to youth outside of school environments, [\\$33 million](#) to build supports for individuals living with a mental illness who are involved in the criminal justice system, and \$55 million to add 200 inpatient beds at state-operated psychiatric centers.



Recent Highlights



Executive Committee Spotlight

Meet Rabbi Bravo, the dynamic, deeply knowledgeable, visionary founder of MakomNY.

Q: What led you to become a faith based leader?

A: I knew I wanted to be a rabbi from the time I was a teenager. I grew up in a synagogue with an incredible rabbi and mentor - a real rabbi's rabbi. He was a wonderful role model - real and honest - a true inspiration! Being a rabbi means I can combine all that I love: creating relationships with people, teaching young and old alike, learning, praying, dialoguing, creating and innovating. Being a rabbi allows me to share my love for my faith with others, finding ways to transmit Judaism through the future generations.

Q: Looking ahead, what are your aspirations for the interfaith community in New York State, and how do you see the Executive Committee contributing to the realization of these goals?

A: I feel honored and privileged to be a part of the incredible team of Executive Committee members. My personal hope and aspiration for my role in this group is to build real relationships and friendships with these colleagues, and together to find ways to educate the greater community about our shared practices and faiths, all while giving guidance to the Governor and the leadership of the great State of New York in how to navigate challenging circumstances to create a healthier society filled with faith, gratitude and acts of kindness.

Q: What does Passover mean to you this year in particular?

A: This year, Passover was a bittersweet experience. While we celebrated the Exodus from Egypt and the freedom from slavery, we were all too aware of the many individuals still being held in captivity. We prayed for freedom for all, and we acknowledged the many innocent lives who have been impacted, just like they were in Egypt..

Q: Are you focused on any particular issue area right now?

A: I am currently working to help people in their struggle with the current situation around Israel and antisemitism, to teach people the history and how to find ways to dialogue and building relationships with people from other faiths.

Q: What are you most proud of in terms of the work you and your organization have done?

A: Nearly ten years ago, I dreamed of ways to create a new model of Jewish community on Long Island. Together, in this past decade, we have worked to engage people in our community to study, pray, volunteer and be in sacred community. Even in the difficult moments, I am proud of the impact we are making on the greater society.





Upcoming Events



We are on tour! We just heard from the Westchester County community and Erie, Niagara, Fulton, and Montgomery are next! Keep an eye out for an invitation to a county near you so we can hear directly from our communities on how we can best support them.

Does your organization have public events coming up? Fill out [THIS FORM](#) to have it included in our next newsletter.

We are hosting a Grant Briefing on May 15. RSVP [here](#).

Connect with us!

Do you have any employees, recent initiatives, or content you want included in our next newsletter? Fill out [THIS FORM](#).

Please fill out [THIS FORM](#) to be added to our database of faith leaders.

Important Interfaith Dates This Month

May 1 – Beltane
May 5-6 - Yom HaShoah
May 9 – Ascension Day
May 19 - Pentecost
May 23 - Vesak



LiveOnNY

Organ Donation Saves Lives

LiveOnNY, the federally designated organ procurement organization (OPO) for the NY Metro region, is dedicated to engaging with faith-based communities through a multi-faceted approach aimed at fostering understanding and promoting organ and tissue donation awareness. We recognize New York's diverse religious landscape and tailor our outreach efforts accordingly.

Our engagement begins with comprehensive educational materials specifically designed for faith communities, ensuring that individuals can make informed decisions aligned with their beliefs. Moreover, our Family Support Advocates undergo specialized training to sensitively navigate the concerns of various faiths, providing crucial support to families throughout the donation process.

Collaboration with houses of worship is facilitated by our Community & Government Affairs team, who conduct educational presentations and host informational tables at health and resource fairs. This proactive engagement extends to partnerships with government entities such as the DMV, NYPD, FDNY, NYC Department of Education, and NYC Votes, amplifying our reach and impact across diverse communities.

Furthermore, our commitment to addressing challenges faced by underrepresented communities is evident through targeted strategies tailored for African American, Chinese American, and Jewish communities. With dedicated liaisons specializing in engagement within these communities, we actively listen to and address their unique concerns about organ and tissue donation.

Ultimately, it's through the collective efforts of our diverse team that LiveOnNY can foster meaningful connections, dispel misconceptions, and promote a culture of donation that respects and embraces the beliefs of all communities.

To learn more, visit [LiveOnNY.org](https://www.LiveOnNY.org)