
For Immediate Release

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NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT’S LATEST EPISODE OF *¡PREPÁRATE!* TALKS WITH NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING’S LORRAINE CORTÉZ-VÁZQUEZ ON THE CHALLENGES FACED BY OLDER ADULTS DURING DISASTERS

¡Prepárate! {[Click to listen to episode 5](#)}

September 24, 2021 — Older adults can face additional challenges when emergencies happen. To ensure that older adults are aware of their rights, and the services and resources available to them, the NYC Department for the Aging offers a wide range of services for the approximately 1.64 million older adults living in New York City. For example, educational services can range from computer literacy, yoga, cooking, as well as an introduction to new forms of technology. With 250 senior centers and affiliated sites across the city dedicated to older adults, the department helps its members stay connected, physically active, and prepared for emergencies.

On the latest episode of *¡Prepárate!*, co-hosts Inés Bebea and Yokarina Duarte spoke with Department for the Aging Commissioner Lorraine Cortéz-Vázquez about the challenges older adults face, collaborating with the New York City Emergency Management Department on emergency preparedness, learning to play the guitar during the pandemic, and career advice for women interested in entering city government.

“Our partnership and collaboration with the Department for the Aging ensures that a vulnerable segment of the population has resources and services specific to their needs prior, during and after emergencies,” **said NYC Emergency Management Commissioner John Scrivani**. “As we know, emergencies can happen to anyone at any time, and we are proud of our relationship with Commissioner Cortéz-Vázquez and her team.”

The NYC Department for the Aging began as the New York City Mayor’s Office for the Aging in the early 1970s as a three-year project. Since then, the agency has continued its mission to eliminate ageism and ensure the dignity and quality of life of diverse older adults.

“It is important for older New Yorkers, especially those who are homebound, to be prepared in advance of emergencies. Many older adults have special needs that should be taken into consideration when it comes to emergency preparedness — medical equipment, necessary prescription medication and other medical needs. It’s also important that they have an emergency support network like friends and family who can regularly contact them during emergencies,” said Department for the Aging Commissioner Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez. “Our Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response works closely with [NYC Emergency Management] in educating older New Yorkers on emergency preparedness and ensuring that they are provided with the support and resources they need in a timely manner.”

You can listen to *¡Prepárate!* on [SoundCloud](#), and [subscribe now](#) to stay up-to-date on the latest episodes.

Profile

Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez currently serves as commissioner for the NYC Department for the Aging. She was appointed by Mayor Bill de Blasio in April 2019 to advance the department's mission to eliminate ageism, ensure the dignity and quality of life of older adults, and support caregivers. Cortés-Vázquez previously worked within the Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs as senior advisor to Mayor de Blasio.

Cortés-Vázquez obtained her undergraduate degree from Hunter College and earned a master's degree from New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. She is a Toll Fellow and has earned certificates from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and Columbia University's School Professional Studies.

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