



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

**EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 50**

**November 19, 2019**

**ESTABLISHING AN**

**ALGORITHMS MANAGEMENT AND POLICY OFFICER**

**WHEREAS**, the City and its agencies must compile and analyze a significant array of data in order to develop and implement the strategies, policies, and operational practices necessary to deliver its numerous programs and services to benefit New York City's millions of residents and visitors, and its infrastructure, businesses, and communities; and

**WHEREAS**, to improve efficiency, accuracy, and coordination in such efforts, and to promote data-driven decision-making in the delivery of resources and services, City agencies use, develop, and leverage various technical tools and systems for collecting, synthesizing, and analyzing information; and

**WHEREAS**, in this digital age, vast amounts of data of all types are increasingly created, collected, integrated, used, and shared in new ways made possible through the use of algorithms and other emerging technologies, and thus traditional governance frameworks must evolve and adapt to ensure that principles of fairness, transparency, human-centered design, and privacy protection remain central to government practices, recognizing both the benefits to be gained, as well as the potential risks of inadvertent harm to individuals and communities that may result from the use of such tools and systems absent new understandings and guidance; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Local Law 49 of 2018, in May 2018 a mayoral task force was established and convened relating to the use of automated decision systems ("ADS") in City government, which is composed of members of City agencies and external organizations and chaired by the Mayor's Office of Operations ("Operations"), and which in November 2019 issued a comprehensive set of recommendations to help guide the City in this emerging field, including, *inter alia*, a call to establish an organizational structure within City government to manage ADS; and

**WHEREAS**, informed by these recommendations, the City seeks to centralize leadership relating to the fair and responsible use of algorithmic tools and other emerging technologies in City agency decision-making, coordinate efforts to create and strengthen related best practices citywide, and support agencies in implementing such practices, with input and guidance from

experts both within and external to City government, and toward this goal, wishes to establish a dedicated, senior-level role to carry out such responsibilities; and

**WHEREAS**, Operations—which includes the Mayor’s Office of Data Analytics, Mayor’s Office of Information Privacy, and Mayor’s Office for Economic Opportunity—develops, manages and coordinates multiagency programs and initiatives, and uses data to: help make informed policy decisions; promote efficiency, transparency, and accountability across City government; lead the City in privacy best practices; and advance equity and opportunity for all New Yorkers; and

**WHEREAS**, Operations has the breadth of relevant cross-agency project and performance management, information privacy, data analytics, and expertise necessary to house and manage this new citywide position and to help guide and support City agencies in this emerging field;

**NOW THEREFORE**, by the power vested in me as Mayor of the City of New York, it is hereby ordered that:

Section 1. Definitions. For purposes of this Order:

- a. “Algorithm” means a sequence of instructions or rules or other problem-solving operation used to cause a technical tool or system to execute a set of actions.
- b. “Decision-making” means the process by which information is considered by a City or agency official or employee which has the potential to influence or determine an agency’s actions, policies, services, programs, employment, contracting, rulemaking, budgeting, or allocation of resources.

§ 2. There is established within the Office of the Mayor:

a. An Algorithms Management and Policy Officer (“Officer”). The Officer, reporting to the director of Operations, will serve as a centralized resource to help guide the City and its agencies in the development, responsible use, and assessment of algorithmic and related technical tools and systems (“algorithmic tools and systems”), and for engaging and educating the public on issues related to City use of these and other related technologies. The Officer will coordinate with relevant Operations staff, City officials, agency staff, and be guided by the expertise provided by the committees established herein, to carry out the following functions and duties:

- (i) Establish governing principles to guide City agencies in balancing the ethical and innovative uses of data facilitated through the use of algorithmic tools and systems in agency decision-making, to ensure they provide the greatest benefit for New Yorkers and the City;
- (ii) Design and implement a framework, including criteria, to help agencies identify, prioritize, and assess algorithmic tools and systems that support agency decision-making, considering their complexity, the benefits, impact, and any potential risk of harm to any individual or group arising from their use, and any other relevant characteristics;

- (iii) Develop and implement policies and protocols to guide the City and its agencies in the fair and responsible use of such tools and systems, considering the unique mission, purpose, and operational needs of each agency;
- (iv) Design and implement protocols for agency reporting to the Office on their use of algorithmic tools and systems in agency decision-making;
- (v) Plan and implement a public engagement and education strategy related to the City's use of algorithmic tools and systems;
- (vi) Create and maintain a public-facing platform that provides a mechanism for receiving public comments and questions, explains how members of the public can be connected with relevant resources, and in accordance with relevant legal, privacy, and cybersecurity considerations, makes available certain information about such tools and systems;
- (vii) Establish and implement a citywide protocol for receiving requests for information from individual members of the public who have been affected by a City agency's use of an algorithmic tool or system, and for directing them to the appropriate City agency and other resources, including but not limited to the agency liaison designated pursuant to section 3 of this Order;
- (viii) Establish and implement a citywide protocol for receiving, investigating, and addressing any complaints from individuals regarding any suspected or actual harm experienced in connection with a City agency's use of algorithmic tools and systems, and advising agencies on any further actions that may be appropriate under the circumstances;
- (ix) Research new developments and best practices in managing the City's use of algorithmic tools and systems in agency decision-making, and remain current in this emerging field; and
- (x) Prepare and submit a biennial report in accordance with section 4 of this Order.

Personnel and other resources to support the work of the Officer will be provided within 90 days of the effective date of this Order.

b. An Algorithms Management Steering Committee ("Steering Committee"), convened quarterly and chaired by the director of Operations or such director's designee, comprised of senior-level representatives from the following City agencies and offices: office of the first deputy mayor; corporation counsel; commission on human rights; chief privacy officer; office of data analytics; chief technology officer; department of information technology and telecommunications; cyber command; and any additional representatives with relevant expertise as the director of Operations or such director's designee may deem necessary to further the goals and efforts of the Steering Committee and Officer. The Steering Committee will advise the director of Operations and Officer on the functions set

out in subdivision (a) of section 2 of this Order, and contribute subject matter expertise from their respective domain areas to inform the cross-disciplinary work of the Officer.

c. An Algorithms Advisory Committee (“Advisory Committee”), convened at least twice per year, chaired by the Officer or such Officer’s designee, and consisting of seven members, including the chair, with other appointees being members of the public with relevant expertise in any of the following areas: data and technology innovation, civil or human rights or criminal justice, advocacy, community-based organizing, education, technology, law, health and human services, computer science, finance, data analytics, information privacy, cybersecurity, or other relevant field. Four members will be appointed by the Mayor, and three will be appointed by the Speaker of the City Council. The Advisory Committee will:

- (i) Advise the Steering Committee and Officer on the protocols and best practices related to City use of algorithmic tools and systems in agency decision-making;
- (ii) Explore and discuss issues relevant to the development, use, assessment, and best practices concerning algorithmic tools and systems;
- (iii) Serve as a mechanism for collecting and communicating questions, concerns, and relevant expertise from individuals and groups external to the City to the Officer; and
- (iv) Hold at least one public meeting each year.

The Advisory Committee will be established within 120 days of the effective date of this Order.

§ 3. City agencies will fully cooperate with the Officer in carrying out the mandates of this Order. Each agency head will designate an employee to serve as a liaison to the Officer and as a point of contact within the agency for public inquiry.

§ 4. Beginning on December 1, 2020 and biennially thereafter, the Officer will submit to the Mayor and Speaker of the City Council, and publish online, a report on the progress made in implementing the directives set forth in this Order.

§ 5. No information that is required to be disclosed or reported by this Order will be done so in a manner that would violate any applicable provision of federal, state, or local law or that would interfere with a law enforcement investigation or other investigative activity by an agency or would compromise public safety.

§ 6. This Order is effective immediately.



---

Bill de Blasio  
Mayor