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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, FIRST LADY MCCRAY, COMMISSIONER PIERRE-LOUIS AND ACTING  
STATEN ISLAND DISTRICT ATTORNEY MASTER ANNOUNCE GROUNDBREAKING OF FIFTH  
NYC FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER ON STATEN ISLAND**

*de Blasio administration ensures every NYC domestic violence victim and their children have access to  
comprehensive resources and services in one location*

**NEW YORK**—A Family Justice Center is coming to Staten Island. Mayor Bill de Blasio, First Lady Chirlane McCray, Commissioner Rosemonde Pierre-Louis of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence and Acting Staten Island District Attorney Daniel Master today celebrated the groundbreaking of the future home of the City’s fifth Family Justice Center, located on Staten Island.

By bringing a Family Justice Center to every borough, the de Blasio administration has achieved a major milestone in its ongoing effort to ensure every survivor of domestic violence in New York City has access to a path to safety and stability.

“Today we have a simple message for any New Yorker suffering from domestic abuse: you are not alone,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “All of the City’s Family Justice Centers offer free, confidential services, regardless of income, sexual orientation or immigration status. I am proud to break ground today to bring that same support to Staten Island, and cement NYC as the largest network of Family Justice Centers anywhere in the country. We stand ready and willing to give all those who need it access to justice, to safety, and to hope, and are coming closer to the day when every New Yorker can live their life with dignity and security.”

Building on the nationally recognized model of the City’s four existing Family Justice Centers, the Staten Island Center will provide comprehensive multi-agency services for victims of intimate partner violence, elder abuse and sex trafficking in one location. When a victim comes into a Family Justice Center, he or she can receive wrap-around services from legal consulting to housing assistance without having to travel to various locations. The estimated \$5.9 million, 10,000-square-foot Family Justice Center will be located at 126 Stuyvesant Place in close proximity to various court buildings, including Criminal, Family and Supreme Courts, and the District Attorney will co-locate Assistant District Attorneys from the Domestic Violence Bureau. NYPD Domestic Violence Prevention Officers will be on-site, in addition to staff from multiple community organization partners who will offer a variety of supportive services. This collaboration will expand the Center’s reach to a significant range of the City’s most vulnerable populations. The Center will open its doors to clients in the coming months.

“Domestic violence wrecks lives and causes lasting trauma. Providing a welcoming place to stay, with support to navigate services, is just a first step in helping abuse survivors rebuild their lives,” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. “That’s why we’re expanding mental health services at all five Family Justice Centers. And the services will come from the communities of those in need, with the comfort of a familiar language and culture, in a time of crisis. These Centers don’t just save people – they help them transition to a better life.”

“This administration has made an unprecedented investment into strengthening resources for victims of domestic violence and has strongly supported a service delivery model that includes the largest network of

Family Justice Centers in the United States. As a result of OCDV's efforts, last year there was a 20 percent increase citywide in the number of client visits to the Family Justice Centers. The establishment of the City's fifth Family Justice Center in Staten Island further expands the capacity of the City to ensure that domestic violence victims have access to multi-agency co-located services in every borough and puts brick and mortar to the comprehensive services we have been providing to victims in Staten Island," said **Rose Pierre-Louis, Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner**.

"The groundbreaking of the new Staten Island Family Justice Center is truly a wonderful occasion and the realization of a long-held dream. I am proud to have worked hand-in-hand with Commissioner Rose Pierre-Louis in making this vision a reality. The SIFJC will put vital one-stop resources at the fingertips of domestic violence victims," said **Daniel L. Master, Jr., Acting Staten Island District Attorney**.

"The New York City Council is committed to connecting domestic violence survivors with the resources they need to enter a path of safety and stability," said **Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. "The Staten Island Family Justice Center will provide survivors of domestic violence with critical safety and support services and I thank the de Blasio Administration for their on-going efforts to eradicate domestic violence in New York City and help our City's most vulnerable populations."

"It's a privilege to see our years of fighting for a Family Justice Center pay off. As District Attorney, too many heartbreaking cases of domestic violence came across my desk. For six years, domestic violence victims were assisted by a Domestic Violence Coordinator, whom I hired. I'm excited that movement on the actual construction of the FJC will take place, and in the not-too-distant future the FJC will begin helping victimized families work through and overcome their challenges," said **Congressman Dan Donovan**.

"This commitment by the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence is a huge step in securing the resources and support that victims of domestic violence – and their families – need on Staten Island, in a convenient location, easing much of the angst and stress victims feel. I congratulate mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Rose Pierre-Louis on this accomplishment. I would be remiss if I didn't thank former Council Speaker Christine Quinn, whose leadership and commitment ensured we secured \$1.5 million in capital funds to help make this a reality," said **Staten Island Borough President James Oddo**.

As a result of the dedicated work by Mayor de Blasio and the Office to Combat Domestic Violence to elevate the City's response to domestic violence, intimate-partner homicides have decreased by 27 percent in the last two years alone. In the last year on Staten Island, domestic violence-related rapes have decreased by 40 percent and domestic violence-related felony assaults have decreased by over 7 percent.

The four current Family Justice Centers have also had clear success in connecting more survivors to vital support. In total, they have served 129,630 clients and have had 337,051 client visits over the past 10 years. In 2014, client visits increased by 22 percent and have increased an additional 6 percent so far this year. Once the Staten Island Family Justice Center opens, domestic violence victims throughout all five boroughs will have access to a centralized and safe location where they may get the help that they need in their own borough.

The creation of the New York City Family Justice Center in Staten Island comes after the Staten Island Domestic Violence Response Team has successfully operated in the borough since it was launched in 2012. The Domestic Violence Response Team works with high-risk victims of intimate partner violence and provides multi-agency service plans and coordination to meet the needs of the clients and their children. Over 49 City and State agencies and community-based organizations have partnered with the Response Team to bring comprehensive services to more than 130 clients since the inception of the program. The success of this model in Staten Island informed the launch of the Coordinated Approach to Preventing Stalking (CAPS) Program with the goal of bringing awareness to the seriousness of stalking, increasing the identification and reporting of stalking incidents and enhancing stalking arrests and prosecutions. The strong partnership of agencies created through the Response Team will be incorporated into the design and implementation of the Staten Island Family Justice Center.

The Family Justice Centers are walk-in facilities that provide free and confidential services regardless of the client's language, income, immigration status, gender identity or sexual orientation. The Centers bring together a number of community-based service providers and a wide range of City agencies to reach the collective goal of reducing the number of intimate partner incidents, escalation, recidivism and homicides. The Centers provide victims with a diverse spectrum of services that they need to put their lives back together, including:

- Civil legal representation for immigration and Family Court matters
- Prosecution of domestic violence crimes
- Safety planning and risk assessment
- Assistance with emergency shelter and housing
- Assistance with filing police reports
- Public benefits
- On-site childcare
- Counseling for victims and child witnesses
- Support groups
- Financial literacy
- Job and vocational training

“We are proud to have partnered with the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, our Local Elected Officials and Community Stakeholders for the groundbreaking of the Staten Island Justice Center. For the first time in Staten Island, families and community members will have access to a facility with social and legal resources right in their own neighborhood. In continuing Mayor Bill de Blasio's vision for a healthy, sustainable city, we are committed to providing well-designed, safe environments that enhance our communities and contribute to the City’s growth, said **Feniosky Peña-Mora, Department of Design and Construction Commissioner**.

“It has been an honor to work with our partners to envision a facility that will provide such critical services to survivors of domestic violence. This project highlights what is possible when a group of thoughtful and compassionate individuals come together with the singular vision of designing a facility that is focused on creating a supportive environment that is respectful of its client’s needs,” said **Stacey Cumberbatch, Department of Citywide Administrative Services Commissioner**.

“From technical outfitting and support of the City’s Family Justice Centers since their inception over a decade ago, to the newest facility announced today, DoITT remains honored to contribute to such an important initiative,” said **Anne Roest, Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications Commissioner**. “Helping New Yorkers gain new hope and a fresh start reflects the application of technology at its best.”

“For the past 10 years, the Family Justice Center Initiative has worked to ensure New Yorkers don’t have to suffer through the fear and shame of domestic violence in silence. By opening a new Center in Staten Island, we’re giving even more survivors access to these vital services – including mental health services – and putting them on a path to safety and stability,” said **Gabrielle Fialkoff, Senior Advisor to the Mayor, Director of the Office of Strategic Partnerships**. “We are so grateful to our private funders for collaborating with the Mayor’s Fund and the Office to Combat Domestic Violence in support of this effort – today’s expansion would not be possible without them.”

“In expanding the Family Justice Center initiative to Staten Island, we are now making significant progress in our fight to break the cycle of domestic violence in every borough,” said **Darren Bloch, Executive Director of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City**. “Over the past 10 years, the Mayor’s Fund has been proud to partner with the Office to Combat Domestic Violence on this program, using our unique ability to forge public-private partnerships to secure more than \$4.2 million in funding as well as to evaluate and improve this innovative model. We will continue to work with OCDV and our private funding partners to connect domestic violence victims to lifesaving support and to encourage others to take action against abuse.”

"Domestic violence continues to plague our communities, it doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, or what you look like. Because of that, I am thrilled to see that the City is breaking ground on a new Family Justice Center, here in Staten Island. We are still falling short of our fair share of criminal justice funds, but this is a good start," said **State Senator Diane Savino**.

"I applaud the City's efforts to address domestic violence here by opening a Family Justice Center on Staten Island and giving us the resources to help victims of domestic violence and see that justice is served," said **Assembly Member Matthew Titone**.

"There may be no other crime that creates a more complicated situation for its victims. The need for these services is great, and we're thankful that the victims and children of domestic violence will now have these resources at their disposal to help them move forward," said **Assembly Member Joseph Borelli**.

"The groundbreaking for Staten Island's own Family Justice Center is a critical step forward in assisting Staten Islanders impacted by horrible domestic violence and abuse-related incidents. The success of these Centers in the other four boroughs, having helped over 100,000 people to date, is well established and I applaud the efforts made by the de Blasio administration and the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence on this historic occasion for our borough," said **Assembly Member Michael Cusick**.

"Sadly, domestic violence is an epidemic in Staten Island, with more than 1,600 incidents reported last year alone. By bringing a Family Justice Center with a wide range of services and resources, we are taking a significant step toward giving families the help they need to live safe, productive lives. Based on a model that has proven successful in other cities, this center will be a one-stop location for families, offering counseling, legal services, housing assistance, on-site childcare and more. I thank everyone who has worked to bring this center to Staten Island, as I know it will help countless families and save lives. My hope is that this center also helps shine a light on domestic violence, encouraging victims to come forward and receive the help that they deserve," said **Council Member Debi Rose**.

"By placing critical support and legal services in one centralized location close to the courts, the Staten Island Family Justice Center will help ease the burden for victims and make our ongoing efforts to end the vicious cycle of domestic violence in our communities even more effective. This center has been a vision of Rep. Daniel Donovan for more than a decade when he was district attorney, and I am very pleased to see it become a reality," said **Council Member Steven Matteo**.

"Family Justice Centers provide both help and hope to the victims of domestic violence and sex trafficking. I am so pleased that Staten Islanders will soon have access to these vital services within their home borough; no one should have to cross a bridge or tunnel for quality, coordinated care. I commend the Administration for their continued work to combat domestic violence in this City and for recognizing that victims' services is a critical part of our public safety efforts. I thank Mayor de Blasio and First Lady Chirlane McCray for their commitment to the emotional and physical well-being of the people of New York, Commissioner Rosemonde Pierre-Louis for her leadership at the helm of our Citywide efforts to combat domestic violence and District Attorney Daniel Masters and his office for their partnership on this valuable project," said **Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson, Chair of the Committee on Public Safety**.

"Inaccessibility and fear have often been the challenges that domestic violence survivors face when seeking assistance. The groundbreaking of the City's fifth Family Justice Center signifies our City's unwavering commitment to connecting survivors with critical support and resources at a central location that would enable them to begin their new lives. It is evident that the previous four Family Justice Centers have been instrumental in curbing the rate of domestic violence incidents citywide, but in order to maintain this momentum we must ensure that all women can safely seek help without fear of retaliation. As Chair of the Committee on Women's Issues, I laud Mayor de Blasio, First Lady McCray, Commissioner Pierre-Louis, and the Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence for their leadership in expanding this vital and life-saving network. Through these partnerships, we can provide the services that will empower our most vulnerable populations – women and children," said **Council Member Laurie A. Cumbo, Chair of the Committee on Women's Issues**.

“When Spacesmith was chosen to design the Staten Island Family Justice Center, we understood the importance of this facility to the local community and the city at large. We are proud to have partnered with the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, the Staten Island District Attorney’s Office and the Department of Design and Construction to design a safe, dignified and welcoming environment that supports OCDV’s mission and goals. Our design intent was to efficiently accommodate the programmatic functions within a clean, modern and contextually appropriate space flooded with natural light. A large multifunction training room anchors the center of the space with OCDV’s and District Attorney’s offices arranged along the perimeter areas. A welcoming Hospitality Room appointed with comfortable furniture and a fun, colorful Children’s Room lies in proximity to the main lobby. Durable finishes, low flow plumbing fixtures and energy-efficient LED lighting were specified to lessen the environmental impact of the design while the use of natural finish white oak throughout adds a feeling of warmth. Our overriding goal for the project was to provide the OCDV an approachable, dignified and comforting space, imbued with a sense of place and purpose. We congratulate OCDV on the milestone occasion and look forward to the grand opening ribbon cutting,” said **Marc Gordon, Partner at Spacesmith.**

To date, the FJC initiative has been part of a partnership supported by more than \$4.2 million in private grants made to the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to facilitating high-impact public-private partnerships throughout New York City's five boroughs. Private funding of this pilot has helped provide critical evidence of its effectiveness, leveraging the current public investment in the new Staten Island Center. Past supporters of the Family Justice Center initiative include The Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation, Robin Hood Foundation, Avon Products Foundation, Brooke Jackman Foundation, Allstate Foundation, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, The Michael Bolton Charities, and Verizon Foundation.

For help from the Family Justice Center near you or to support the Family Justice Center Initiative visit [www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence](http://www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence) or call (212) 788-3156.

### **About the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence**

The Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence, established in 2001, oversees the citywide delivery of domestic violence services, develops policies and programs, and works with diverse communities to increase awareness of domestic violence. The [NYC Family Justice Centers](http://www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence) are a public-private initiative of the OCDV. These one-stop domestic violence service centers reduce barriers and make it easier for victims of domestic violence, elder abuse, and sex trafficking to get the help that they need, in their language, regardless of immigration status, income, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Currently, OCDV operates four NYC Family Justice Centers in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens with a fifth Center opening in Staten Island in the coming month. For more information, go to [www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence](http://www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence) and follow OCDV on Twitter @NYCagainstabuse.

### **About the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City**

The Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, chaired by First Lady Chirlane McCray, is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization committed to promoting partnerships between the City and the private sector in support of high-impact public programs. The Mayor’s Fund is focused on serving as a vehicle for the generous business and philanthropic communities to contribute to City programs and enhance the lives of New Yorkers in areas ranging from mental health, to youth workforce development to immigration and citizenship. To learn more about the Mayor’s Fund, visit [nyc.gov/fund](http://nyc.gov/fund) and follow the Fund on Twitter [@NYCMayorsFund](https://twitter.com/NYCMayorsFund).

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