



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**MAYOR ADAMS SIGNS LEGISLATION PROVIDING DOULA SERVICES ACROSS FIVE
BOROUGH, STRENGTHEN MATERNAL HEALTH**

Package of Seven Bills Will Ensure NYC Remains National Leader in Maternal Health

Bills Will Codify Citywide Doula Initiative Launched Earlier This Year

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today signed historic legislation to ensure New York City remains a national leader in maternal health. At a time when Black mothers are nine times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than white women in New York City, these bills will promote education, increase transparency, and expand access to maternal health care for pregnant New Yorkers. The passage and signing of these bills underscore the city’s commitment to ensuring every expecting family has the resources and support needed to welcome a newborn into their lives.

“This is a critical moment for women’s health in New York City and across the country,” said **Mayor Adams**. “For those who choose it, motherhood can be tough — physically, medically, psychologically. I’ve seen firsthand the resilience of mothers: My mother gave birth to six children. And the numbers are clear: Black women are nine times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than white women in New York City. Today, we are making sure all expecting families have access to health care when they need it most, no matter the color of their skin, their income bracket, or where they live. Our children are our most precious resource and by investing in them and their families from the start, we’ll build a safer and healthier city for generations to come. I’m grateful to the City Council for their partnership getting this important work done.”

“The package of bills signed today help us take significant steps in supporting expectant families and in closing the racial maternal health gap,” said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Anne Williams-Isom**. “Thank you to our partners in government and to all the service providers that will work with expectant families in New York City.”

“Maternal health inequities demand urgent action,” said **New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasani**. “These bills will provide

more data, more services, and more information to families about what's available. They are forceful responses that we are proud to support.”

“This package of bills will help NYC Health + Hospitals in its ongoing efforts to provide our patients with high-quality, comprehensive health care before, during, and after pregnancy,” said **NYC Health + Hospitals Chief Women’s Health Officer Wendy Wilcox, MD, MPH, MBA, FACOG**. “I want to thank the Mayor Eric Adams and the City Council for making maternal health a priority. NYC Health + Hospitals will continue to work with our legislative partners, community-based organizations, and local and state health officials to ensure Black and Brown women across the city have the resources they need to take charge of their reproductive health.”

With the implementation of these bills, New York City is strengthening maternal health care, fighting maternal mortality, and raising public awareness around the resources that expecting families have access to in New York City:

- **Intro 86-A** establishes a public education program regarding the city’s standards for respectful care at birth and establishes a right to be free from pregnancy-related discrimination while receiving health care services in New York City.
- **Intro 409-A** improves access to data on maternal mortality and morbidity.
- **Intro 472-A** codifies the DOHMH program launched earlier this year to train doulas and provide doula services to residents in all five boroughs.
- **Intro 478-A** launches an education campaign in New York City to raise public awareness about the benefits and services provided by doulas and midwives.
- **Intro 482-A** requires DOHMH to provide public data on polycystic ovary syndrome and endometriosis.
- **Intro 490-A** codifies DOHMH efforts to provide sexual and reproductive health services and research sexual and reproductive health disparities within the city.
- **Intro 509-A** codifies a public education program on maternal mortality and morbidity, and requires DOHMH to report on the incidence of cesarean sections and recommendations to reduce maternal mortality and severe morbidity.

“Maternal health is a social justice issue that is a matter of life or death for many women and birthing people in our city and country, especially in Black communities,” said **New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams**. “This historically diverse and women-majority council prioritized addressing this issue to reduce the severe inequities faced by Black, Latino, and indigenous people in receiving equitable care. The horrifying lived experiences that have endangered too many lives are finally being acknowledged with concrete policy actions, and the enactment of these laws is a major step forward for our city. This progress would not have been possible without the leadership of women in the council, and it shows the impact on policy when women are accurately represented in lawmaking.”

“We are in a state of emergency in our country when Black women are still three times more likely to die during childbirth and the mortality rate is even higher for Black women living in New York City,” said **Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson**. “Today’s bill signing will ensure that Black and Brown birthing individuals in our city receive culturally sensitive, patient-centered care that is attuned to their unique needs free of bias and racism which has resulted in the deaths of far too many pregnant people. I want to thank Public Advocate Jumaane Williams for his partnership in pushing Intro 86-A forward, Speaker Adrienne Adams, the New York City Council Women’s Caucus, and our birth workers for their advocacy in ensuring all birthing individuals in our city receive unbiased maternal care before, during, and after childbirth.”

“It’s exciting and inspiring to see so many elected officials and advocates standing behind the important goal of closing maternal mortality disparities between Black mothers and their white counterparts,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso**. “Pregnancy and childbirth should be a beautiful and hopeful experience for everyone. Instead, it’s met with nerves and uncertainty for far too many of our neighbors. Thank you, Mayor Adams, for not only making maternal health one of your priorities, but for giving attention to the multifaceted issues that lead to our stark reality through your proposed maternal health bill package. Together, along with all the supporters walking with us, we’re sure to make New York City one of the safest places to have a baby during our tenure.”

“Despite the Supreme Court’s decision to take away our daughters’ rights all across this nation, New York City will never sit idle,” said **New York City Councilmember Julie Menin**. “My bill, which the mayor is signing today, will codify and expand New York City’s health services, thereby protecting and increasing access to safe abortion care. Enacting this legislation will expand protections for New Yorkers who need access to services such as contraception, abortion, and screenings for cancer and sexually transmitted infections. Today, we lead this fight as we prepare New York City for the next wave of individuals needing reproductive and sexual health services.”

“Today’s signing of the council’s landmark maternal health package into law by Mayor Adams is a significant victory for those of us who have championed the movement to close the glaring and deadly inequities faced by women and birthing people of color in our city daily,” said **New York City Councilmember Mercedes Narcisse**. “These bills will surely help close the racial disparities in maternal and infant deaths and save precious lives. I look forward to our continued efforts to fight to address all healthcare inequities across the board.”

“The ability to protect the health of mothers, birthing people, and babies in childbirth is a basic measure of a society’s development, said **New York City Councilmember Lynn Schulman, Chair, Health Committee**. “This legislative package will enable women to have more bodily autonomy, especially with the unfortunate reversal of Roe v. Wade. Thank you to Mayor Eric Adams and Speaker Adrienne Adams for your leadership in making maternal health a priority.”

“As a woman, a daughter, a mother, and a member of the first majority women council, it is an honor as we officially establish a law that will save the lives of Black women across the city,” said **New York City Councilmember Althea Stevens**. “Maternal health accessibility is essential, especially in the current state of the negligence of women and birthing human rights

around the country. This will not just work for the benefit of now but will be in honor of all our loved ones we lost while giving birth. We will continue to stand as a united front, as this law is just a message to let the country know that we are just getting started.

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