

Transcript: Mayor Eric Adams Announces the Opening of Enrollment for DSNY's Sanitation Worker Civil Service Exam

June 7, 2022

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you. Thanks so much, both commissioners, both Commissioner Pinnock and Commissioner Tisch, and the men and women who are part of DSNY. Throughout the winter, as we attempted to keep our city moving, I was just impressed firsthand as they did their job. This is one of 59 garages throughout our entire city. We often take it for granted that when we remove tons of trash, we only know when it is there, but the importance of this occupation and profession, just a significant part of our city. The job that our men and women in the DSNY carry, they carry out every day, is just extremely impressive. When you think about it, we discard the trash, we wonder where it goes, the professionalism of making sure it's removed from our streets, removed from our homes. The complicated recycling program as we continue to evolve.

Mayor Adams: This just plays a major role in the components of the public servants in this city, and we see it all the time over and over again. But we want to make sure that we have the diversity that's reflective of New York City. That's why we're sending the word out, a job that pays \$83,000 after five years, a job that has great vacation benefits as well as good healthcare. This is a middle class salary. The stability of this city is based on our civil servant, and I know that far too well, after 22 years of being one in the Police Department, I know how important it is. It was for my family. It was important for me, and we want to send a message out loud and clear to other New Yorkers of the great occupation of the men and women of the Department of Sanitation.

Mayor Adams: So sign up, be a part of this great movement, and be part of keeping our cities clean, safe, and healthy. So, commissioner, and entire crew behind me, thank you for what you are doing, what you have done, and what you will continue to do to keep our cities clean, safe, and healthy. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Tisch: Thank you so much, Mayor Adams. Next we will hear from my colleague at the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, Commissioner Dawn Pinnock.

Commissioner Dawn Pinnock, Department of Citywide Administrative

Services: Thank you, Commissioner Tisch. Good afternoon, everyone. It's great to be here with Mayor Adams, Commissioner Tish, Chief Bailey, and so many of New York's Strongest. I'm Dawn Pinnock, and I proudly serve as the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services, also known as DCAS. At DCAS, our mission is to make city government work for all New Yorkers. One way that we do this is by administering the civil service system to provide a fair and equitable way to hire city employees. I'm passionate about this because public service is in my blood. I've spent over 25 years working in city government, and I come from a family of proud civil servants. I know firsthand that working in government offers good pay, quality benefits, and rewarding opportunities to serve fellow New Yorkers and civil service system is really what opens that door.

Commissioner Pinnock: My parents viewed the civil service system as the great equalizer. As a Black man and a Black woman growing up in a very different era, many career opportunities were denied to them, but civil service, a hiring system based on merit, doesn't judge you by the color of your skin, your gender, or your sexual orientation. It opens the door for everyone, and this is important because to best serve the residents of this great city, we need a workforce that reflects the talents and diversity of all New Yorkers. So we want to encourage New Yorkers of all backgrounds to join our ranks. So, if you are interested in a rewarding career as a sanitation worker, please visit nyc.gov/examsforjobs or visit one of our DCAS testing centers that's available in every borough of the city. Our application period is open from June 8th to June 30th. Thank you.

Commissioner Tisch: Thank you commissioner. In the time that I have been on the job, I've met some incredible people across our department, dedicated public servants who keep our city clean, safe, and healthy, and they all have one thing in common, their careers began when they took the sanitation worker civil service exam. I'd like to bring up now one such public servant, Chief Cherry Bailey, whose career began when she took this exam 19 years ago. I am also happy to share that I recently had the pleasure of assigning her to one of the highest ranking field positions in our department as the Borough Chief for Queens East. Please welcome, Chief Cherry Bailey.

Chief Cherry Bailey: Thank you, Commissioner Tisch, and thank you Mayor Adams for being with us today. I'm Chief Cherry Bailey, and as the commissioner mentioned, I was recently honored with the assignment of Borough Chief for Queens East. When I took the sanitation worker exam 19 years ago, I was a single mom working as a flight attendant. It was an okay job, but there was no stability and no path for advancement. I signed up to take the same civil service exam that is opening to the public tomorrow. I didn't know what to expect, but by the time my number was called in 2005, I knew I needed to change.

Chief Bailey: I needed a career with good opportunities and a chance to help our city. I became a New York City Sanitation Worker, and I never looked back. Moving up the ranks from supervisor to superintendent, to chief, to where I am today, I want to say to anyone listening, if you don't know what you're doing with your life, but you want to make a difference, you want to help others, and you want to make a good living doing it, sign up to take this test. It could be the best thing that ever happened in your career like it was for me. Thank you.

Commissioner Tisch: Thank you, Chief. I don't think anyone could have said that better or communicated our message better. I will just add that this is a rare opportunity to join the Strongest, a chance to become a New York City Sanitation Worker, a meaningful career with great benefits, good pay stability, and the satisfaction of taking care of our city. After five and a half years on the job, sanitation workers hit a top base pay of over \$83,000. There are also opportunities to earn overtime and a world-class pension.

Commissioner Tisch: I want to be very clear. This opportunity only exists for a limited time. It is very important to us to use this opportunity to produce new classes of sanitation workers that represent the diversity of the city that they serve, and we encourage all interested New Yorkers to go to nyc.gov/dsny and register between June 8th and June 28th. Do it for your neighborhood. Do it for your family. Do it for yourself. I look forward to working with you. Now we will take any questions from the media.

Mayor Adams: Good job. Good job. Thank you. Thank you all. We're going to take a few off-topics. You can excuse, [inaudible]. You can excuse. All right.

Question: Good day, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Adams: What's up, Mike?

Question: So I got a question about this story we did today on the gun detection devices. The CEO of a competitor of Evolv was talking about how the city didn't reach out to them. They'd like an opportunity to show their wares to the city. So, I guess the first question on that is are you open to that? I have one quick follow-up.

Mayor Adams: Mike, we want all technology, and so I think instead of him saying that we did not reach out to him, he should reach out. He stated that he reached out, I don't know where he reached out to. I'm not hard to find. So we want all technology. The goal is to find technology to keep us safe. Now, we can't have it both ways. You can't complain that every wants to use technology and then say, why aren't you finding technology. We want any technology that would keep New Yorkers safe. If they have a product, I looked at the article, I told the deputy mayor, let's go find them. If you know of anyone else that we miss, please let us know. We want all technology.

Question: All right. Will do.

Mayor Adams: Let Mike, because if you don't, he's going to complain later.

Question: One quick follow-up was, you know one of these [inaudible] with the Good Government Group, was saying, this should be done, these pilots, through the agencies, that having it go through the Mayor's Office creates an appearance that there could be a conflict. Do you take that as good advice from him or as an unjust criticism? What do you make of that?

Mayor Adams: No one elected the agencies. They elected me, and I have not found a good government group yet that says something nice. How about saying something nice that, "Eric is trying to find technology to save the lives of New Yorkers." Anytime you want to find a negative comment, you can call that same person and say, "Yes, Eric was wrong for not saying happy birthday to someone." Come on.

Question: Mayor, the Siena poll that's out today does not give you good marks when it comes to handling homelessness and crime five months into your administration. I'm wondering what you make of those numbers and what you would tell New Yorkers, five months in, who are not happy with what they've seen so far.

Mayor Adams: You lost me, of my understanding, correct me if I'm wrong, there was an excellent, an A, there was a good, a B, there was a C, fair. Now, mommy always told me to try to get an A, but she never told me I failed with a C. I think New Yorkers are looking, they're saying, "We're going to give Eric a shot. We believe he's fair." 64 percent of New Yorkers stated fair or better. 29 percent said bad. So yes, we have reversed crime. Yes, our homeless initiative is removing people off the streets. Yes, we've passed some great legislation with our partners in Albany. So I don't know how that poll is viewed as New Yorkers are not saying, "We're going to give Eric a shot."

Question: Well, one other aspect of it is 36 percent say better than de Blasio. 36 percent say same as de Blasio. 17 percent say worse than de Blasio.

Mayor Adams: That's pretty good to me. If you were a New Yorker and you only have 17 percent that state you're worse than in anything, I am happy for that. This is going to give us an opportunity. In six months in office, I know, it seems like longer due to the omnipresence, but we've been in office for six months, and to have New Yorkers who are difficult graders say, 64 percent of New Yorkers say, "Eric is doing a fair or better job." Now, I don't understand how that's bad.

Question: Mr. Mayor, so staying on the poll.

Mayor Adams: Yes, Bernadette?

Question: What do you say to New Yorkers? 70 percent of them said that they feel less safe now than they did pre-pandemic. So what do you say to them? Are you concerned that's their response? Then they're also concerned that there's going to be a shooting because of it, just to paraphrase, a religious background or an ethnic background in their neighborhood. Are you concerned that's something that they're overwhelmingly thinking about, especially as your number one goal has been to make New Yorkers feel safer?

Mayor Adams: You said 50 percent, right?

Question: Well, 70 percent said they feel less safe now than they did pre-pandemic.

Mayor Adams: Well, first of all, you are seeing the results of how we're turning around shootings dropping, how impressive we were in May with homicides, and even in April and May in homicides. What we're doing on our subway system and continue to evolve in our subway system. The feeling of being safe and the actualization of being safe is not an instant feeling. When you're looking at your front pages and your front pages are looking, although there's a million-plus people using the subway, but an incident happened to someone on the subway, and that's the first thing you read in the morning. There's a feeling that must accompany the success that we are going to have.

Mayor Adams: We're going to turn around this city in crime. I know that, and New Yorkers are going to start, not only being safe, they're going to feel safe. So, right now, they are of the belief based on what they're seeing, based on what they're reading, based on what they're hearing, it's going to reach the results that we're going to have to make New Yorkers safe.

Question: Then a quick follow-up. I know yesterday, you said you weren't getting support from the rest of the criminal justice system. Is there anyone specific, for example, right now in San Francisco, there's a recall election for the very progressive DA there. Do you see any prosecutors, judges, et cetera, in New York specifically that might be going against your message to clean up crime and assist again with your role?

Mayor Adams: The people of this city would determine who's on the same team as the men and women who are removing 3,000 guns off the street. The people of New York will determine that, and I'm very clear. I am placing our offices on the front line to remove dangerous guns off the street, on the front line to deal with the violence.

Mayor Adams: I am placing them and we are placing them on the front line. Every other apparatus in the criminal justice system should be in support of what they're doing. I don't believe there is support, if judges are not holding people accountable, if laws are not indicating those who are repeated offenders and violent are not being held accountable, and if we have a bottleneck criminal justice system. We have to keep dangerous people off our streets.

Question: Mr. Mayor, continuing on the poll, if you don't mind.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: One curious standout portion to me was 75, 76% of respondents said they were satisfied with their neighborhood and what was in their living environment, but then you had 56 percent say the city is on the wrong track. What do you make of that sentiment of, "What I see around me is looking good, but maybe the rhetoric I'm getting from the leaders of the city tell me things are worse than what I'm seeing"?

Mayor Adams: Well, that's a great question, because I don't know if we realize the role of what blasts on our front pages every day. You may see a reality around you that things are doing well, but if you get on that J train, and the first thing you see on the page is that someone was shot on a J train, you're going to disregard that you take that trip every day, and you're not a victim of a crime. It becomes your reality.

Mayor Adams: So what I must do, I must continue to foster the optimism that we need to evolve out of the pandemic and just be focused enough to do the things that we are doing, and they are paying off, and they're making results. We just signed a bill today of hotel conversions. This is going to expedite our ability to actually get people into wraparound services. So I know it's going to take a while before New Yorkers feel safe in their city. I know that, but trust me, we're going to get there. I know the team, we have the team we built, and most importantly, I know me.

Mayor Adams: How are you?

Question: Good. How are you?

Mayor Adams: Good.

Question: The Empire State Development Corp is expected to put out a final framework within this month or next on the Penn Station GPP. I know your office is engaged in figuring out the tax incentives. I was just wondering if you could comment on how you feel those negotiations are going, and what the city's position is at this time on how you'd like to see the GPP framework evolve?

Mayor Adams: I had a brief conversation today with the governor around Penn Station, and we are going to continue to allow the team to do what they do, and review their reports. We need to get it done. It's an important initiative. This is a place that have

been filled with blight for a long time, and I'm going to be supportive of what the governor decides and the team that was put in place to make it happen.

Question: Hi, Mayor Adams.

Mayor Adams: How are you?

Question: I'm well, thank you. I hope you're well, too.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: Do you feel that fair is a compliment considering that excellent and good were also options in this New York 1 Siena Poll?

Mayor Adams: Yes. Yes. Listen, a C is not an A, but a C is not an F. I think that when New Yorkers are saying, "Listen, we're seeing what Eric is doing. We're seeing what he's doing around homelessness." Because also in that poll, the majority of New Yorkers want homeless off the street. The majority of New Yorkers want to support police. The majority of New Yorkers believe crime is an issue that I am fighting against. So I think New Yorkers are saying, "We're not going to say he's bad. We're going to say, 'Let's see him do his job, because the guy has only been there six months and he has already started to produce the product that we need.'" So, listen, New Yorkers are hard judges and graders. We all know that. So for a New Yorker to give you a fair, they're saying, "We're going to watch what you're doing."

Question: Does this poll resonate more with you considering it's everyday New Yorkers as opposed to professional naysayers?

Mayor Adams: Well, to me, if I receive all As, I'm still going to work 24 hours a day for New Yorkers. So I think those who keep their eyes on the polls and not their eyes on the people, they lose sight of the mission. So it doesn't matter what people judge, I have a job to do, I have to keep the city safe, clean, recover from COVID, and make sure that it is able to raise healthy children and families. And that's what I'm going to do. I am focused on turning this city around, because this is the greatest city on the globe.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Adams: How are you?

Question: Good. I have two questions. One, there was a report in Politico today that there might be a handshake deal on the city budget as early as this week. I was wondering if you could comment on that. Then my second question is whether you're planning to make any endorsements in the governor's race or the state legislature or congressional races coming?

Mayor Adams: I'm hoping that we could seal the budget as soon as possible. It would send the right message to New Yorkers. Adams & Adams law firm, Adrian and I, we really believe that we could come together to resolve some of the issues that we're facing and once we're able to do so, we're going to announce that as soon as possible. I know they're still in negotiations, they're still having talks, and we don't know the final outcome of those negotiations. But we feel comfortable with the conversations that we have been having thus far.

Mayor Adams: The races, I'm looking at the races. I'm looking at the candidates. These are important times for us, and I need help in all of these bodies. I need help in the state. I need help in the city, and I need help on a federal level. I'm going to Washington tomorrow to testify in front of Congress. New Yorkers and the people of this city and country deserve the help from lawmakers. So I'm going to look at everyone that's running, and I'm going to zero in on where their stances are around public safety, where their stances are on other quality of life issues. So based on that, if I get into races, I'll make an endorsement, but New Yorkers are going to have to make the final decision on who they want to represent them. Okay. Thank you.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Adams: How are you? Yes.

Question: Yes. Good morning. You're looking well.

Mayor Adams: Thank you.

Question: Six months, I give you [inaudible]. So June is Caribbean American Heritage Month, but in regards to heritage month, what is your message to Caribbean Americans, and immigrants?

Mayor Adams: Well, outside of the rich cultural history of the Caribbean community and the Caribbean in diaspora, their contribution to the city and the country. We're looking forward to hosting our event at Gracie Mansion, and I also look forward to ensuring that as we move towards the largest parade in this hemisphere, on the Parkway, I look forward to mashing up the Parkway with them and enjoying the entire holiday.

Question: Thank you.

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