

Mayor Adams Relaunches Initiatives to Cut Red Tape for Building and Small Business Owners, Improve Building Safety

April 27, 2022

Two Citywide Initiatives Help Building Owners Maintain Safe Structures, Comply With Code Instead of Facing Violations and Penalties

New Yorkers Can Call 311 to Request No-Penalty, No-Cost Inspections of Business Signs, Decks, and Retaining Walls

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today relaunched two programs that will help building and small business owners ensure the safety of their buildings without financial penalties — cutting red tape and eliminating barriers to critical safety evaluations and resources. The two citywide initiatives — the No-Penalty Business Accessory Sign Inspection Program and the No-Penalty Deck and Retaining Wall Inspection Program — will give small business owners, homeowners, and other property owners throughout the five boroughs assurance about the condition of their properties, while providing valuable guidance on proper maintenance.

Participants can call through May 31 to receive a free inspection by the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) to determine whether outdoor structures are in good condition with no visibly apparent violating conditions. Following the inspection, DOB will connect with property owners to discuss findings. If any unsafe conditions are discovered, DOB will provide guidance on any issues that need to be fixed without issuing any violations or penalties, allowing owners the opportunity to make corrective repairs and ensure the safety of their property.

“Government is most effective when we bring services directly to the people, and these initiatives keep New Yorkers safe by doing exactly that,” said **Mayor Adams**. “We want to identify issues before they become safety hazards, and we are doing that by partnering with small business and property owners instead of penalizing them.”

“The Adams administration is here to work with New Yorkers and their small businesses,” said **Deputy Mayor for Operations Meera Joshi**. “These programs by the Department of Buildings will help building owners identify problems and work with us to address them before they become a danger and a financial burden.”

“In relaunching these critical programs, the city is changing the paradigm for small businesses by putting education and support first — not costly penalties and onerous red tape,” said **Deputy Mayor for Economic and Workforce Development Maria Torres-Springer**. “Ensuring small businesses have a chance to address issues and ensure safety for themselves and their customers is the best way forward for all New Yorkers.”

“It’s no secret that proactive property maintenance is the best way to prevent costly damage and potential accidents,” said **DOB Acting Commissioner Constadino “Gus” Sirakis, P.E.** “I encourage small businesses and property owners in our city to take advantage of these programs and get started on their spring property maintenance to make sure their building is up to snuff.”

“New York City is coming through for small businesses by cutting red tape and helping them to avoid penalties,” said **New York City Department of Small Business Services Commissioner Kevin D. Kim**. “Through the power of education rather than punishment, we are improving their interactions with government and ensuring safety in our buildings for all New Yorkers.”

Through the No-Penalty Business Accessory Sign Inspection Program and the No-Penalty Deck and Retaining Wall Inspection Program, homeowners and business owners can request a free, no-penalty visual inspection by a DOB inspector of any accessory business sign, deck, porch, or retaining wall on their property — simply by calling 311 between April 27, 2022 and May 31, 2022. If, after an inspection, these outdoor structures are found to be in an unsafe condition, but repairs are made promptly, no penalties will be issued.

Weather, age, and improper installation can all cause outdoor structures to weaken and deteriorate over time. It is important for public safety that property owners ensure these outdoor structures are up to code and properly maintained. By law, property owners in New York City are required to maintain their buildings — including these types of outdoor structures — in a safe and code-compliant condition.

Since the annual No-Penalty Deck and Retaining Wall Inspection Program was first launched in 2005, DOB has performed hundreds of no-penalty inspections, saving homeowners both time and money by identifying potential safety issues before they become a bigger problem. DOB launched its first-ever No-Penalty Business Accessory Sign Inspection Program in 2020, offering to inspect business signs at no cost and without risk of penalties.

Media Contact

pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov

(212) 788-2958