

NYC Ballot Proposals and Brooklyn Judicial Elections

A PLAIN LANGUAGE VOTER EDUCATION GUIDE

Understand the choices. Make your own decision.



Education only. No RESET ratings, endorsements, or Yes or No recommendations.

[VIEW YOUR OFFICIAL SAMPLE BALLOT](#)

findmypollsite.vote.nyc • Enter your home address and choose View Sample Ballot.

November 3, 2026 election | Information checked October 23, 2026

Prepared by Pastor Reginald Lee Bachus | RESET

Cover illustration depicts fictional people. Real candidate photographs appear in the judicial section.

Your choices start with understanding

A sidewalk you use. A program your family relies on. A street you cross. A court you may one day enter. The choices in this guide reach into ordinary life.

You do not need to know every government term to begin. Start with one question. Picture what happens today. Then ask what a Yes vote would change and what a No vote would keep.

The purpose of this guide

RESET helps people become the author of their next decision instead of the product of their last experience. My purpose here is to make the choices easier to understand so you can decide for yourself.

What you will find

First come five ballot proposals that apply across New York City. Each asks whether to change part of the city's basic rulebook. Next come the nineteen candidates in the eight listed Brooklyn judicial contests. Your home address determines which district contests appear on your ballot.

Education only

RESET and Pastor Reginald Lee Bachus do not endorse candidates, give them scores, or recommend Yes or No votes in this guide. We identify outside opinions and link their sources. The same approach applies to every candidate and every proposal.

See the ballot for your own address

[NYC BOARD OF ELECTIONS SAMPLE BALLOT FINDER](#)

Go to findmypollsite.vote.nyc. Enter your home address. Choose the November 3, 2026 election and open View Sample Ballot. Match the proposal numbers and candidate names to this guide. Read the instructions printed on your ballot.

This is a guide to the five city proposals and Brooklyn judicial elections. Other offices on your ballot are outside its scope. The official wording and voting instructions are linked so you can check them directly.

Prepared by Pastor Reginald Lee Bachus

Questions, workshops and community conversations: reggie@reggiebachus.com

Find the part you need

You can work through one proposal at a time. Each has the same three parts: understand the choice, compare best and worst cases for Yes and No, and think it through with RESET.

What you want to understand	Page
The RESET decision process	4
How ballot proposals work	5
Proposal 1 Public space and cafés	6–8
Proposal 2 City contracts	9–11
Proposal 3 Streets land and offices	12–14
Proposal 4 Building permits	15–17
Proposal 5 City savings	18–20
Brooklyn courts and contests	21–24
Candidate photographs and backgrounds	25–35
Assessments records and reporting	36–40
Your worksheet and voting plan	41
Sources credits and reuse	42 onward

A manageable place to start

Read the first page of a proposal. Say the choice in your own words. Then use the picture and questions if you want more detail. You can return to the original sources at any time.

A Yes vote on one proposal does not require a Yes vote on another. You can consider each separately. Within a single proposal, your vote covers all of its parts.

Check the sources: [View your official sample ballot](#)

A RESET before your decision

Before choosing, give yourself room to understand. This process helps you connect the facts to your own values. It does not point you toward a party, candidate, or Yes or No vote.



Five principles to carry with you

RESET principle	Put it into practice
Respect	Hear how the choice may affect different people.
Educate	Learn what the proposal or office actually does.
Serve	Consider the people who rely on the result.
Efficiency	Ask about time, cost and how well the process works.
Transparency	Look for clear reasons, records and source links.

You will see four short RESET questions at the end of every proposal. There is space to write your own reason for your choice.

What is a ballot proposal

Usually, voting means choosing a person. A ballot proposal asks you to choose a rule. These five proposals would change the New York City Charter—the rulebook that sets out how city government works.

Why this part of the ballot matters

Rules decide who must review an application, who may approve it, how neighbors can respond, and how the city plans to save money. You may never fill out a café application yourself. You may still use the sidewalk, live nearby, work there, or care how decisions are made.

Your vote	What it means
Yes	Adopt the changes written into that proposal. You are approving the whole package in that question.
No	Keep the rules that this proposal would change. A No vote does not create a different reform or erase a program that already exists.

Five questions you can consider separately

Proposal	An everyday question
1 Public space	How should the city review permission for cafés, ramps and other sidewalk uses?
2 City contracts	How should businesses and nonprofits apply to do city work?
3 Streets land and offices	How should three kinds of city projects be reviewed?
4 Building permits	Where should construction applications go, and who can approve them?
5 City savings	What rules should guide saving for a difficult financial year?

A hearing is a meeting where people can speak. Notice means being told about a proposal or application. Comment means giving a view. Approval means having the power to authorize something. These are different roles; each proposal may change some of them.

Each case study tests a best and worst case under Yes and under No. Honest leaders can use review powers to protect people; dishonest leaders can use them for favoritism. Faster decisions can serve people well or hide problems if checks fail. These are fictional possibilities, not predictions or allegations. Neither outcome permits corruption or other unlawful conduct. Sources [25–31,51,65] explain the actual rules.

Check the sources: [Official NYC Votes proposal guide](#) | [Full proposed legal changes](#)

Who reviews uses of public space

Should the city remove some required steps for permission to put things on sidewalks and streets?

Picture a café adding outdoor tables or a building adding an entrance ramp. The sidewalk belongs to the public. The owner needs city permission to use part of it. That process affects the applicant, nearby residents, and people passing by.

Words to know Revocable consent means permission the city can take back. It is used for some ramps, benches, utility structures and cafés. It is not ownership of the sidewalk. The City Record is the city's official publication for public notices.

What happens now The applicant goes to the responsible city agency. A public hearing is required, and the applicant pays for newspaper notices. Local officials and the community board receive notice. For sidewalk cafés, the City Council can reject the permission even after the transportation agency approves it.

If you vote Yes

The hearing The agency could choose whether to hold one. A hearing would no longer be required for every application.

Notice and local input Paid newspaper notices would end. City Record notices and notice to local officials and the community board would remain, with an opportunity for those bodies to comment.

The final decision For sidewalk cafés, the Council would lose its separate power to reject the permission. The city would still decide whether to approve each application.

If you vote No

The required hearing and newspaper notices would stay. The Council would keep its separate power to reject sidewalk café permission. An owner could still apply for a café, ramp or other allowed use through the existing process.

Plain-language explanation of the proposed rules. Sources [25,65]. Further details and dates follow the example.

Check the sources: [Read the official explanation](#)

A café owner, a neighbor and a person using a walker



FICTIONAL EXAMPLES • POSSIBILITIES, NOT FORECASTS • AI ILLUSTRATION

The owner wants six café tables. A neighbor asks about noise. A person using a walker needs clear passage. Consider four possible outcomes for this fictional application.

YES best case The agency checks access and listens to local comments. A clear, workable layout gets permission without an unnecessary hearing. The owner saves time and expense; people can still pass safely.

YES worst case The agency overlooks an access problem and skips a hearing. Neighbors can comment, but the Council no longer has its separate power to reject the sidewalk café permission. A poor layout gets approved.

NO best case The required hearing reveals a blocked path. Local review helps secure a better layout; the Council can reject the sidewalk café permission if concerns remain. The business and sidewalk users both benefit.

NO worst case A suitable café plan stalls because an official uses the Council review process to help a favored competitor. Hearings add delay without solving a real problem. The applicant keeps paying and waiting.

For your community conversation Which checks would protect access and fair treatment under either process? Who responds when they fail?

Check the sources: [Check the proposal behind these examples](#)

Think through your choice

Different views to consider

Why some support it NYC Votes summarizes support for reducing costs and delays. New York Lawyers for the Public Interest points to the difficulty of getting accessibility ramps through the existing process. [25]

Why some question it NYC Votes reports that the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York and D9 Harlem Votes favor keeping stronger formal opportunities for local review. Their concerns include access to participation and the Council's role. [25]

These are outside views. RESET does not recommend a Yes or No vote.

Who is D9 Harlem Votes NYC Votes identifies it as a Harlem-based, nonpartisan civic engagement coalition. Its own profile describes members of historically Black fraternities and sororities. We cite its views as a community coalition, not as an official Council or community-board statement. It also supports Proposal 5, according to NYC Votes. [25,29]

Check the sources: [D9 Harlem Votes own profile](#)

Details that help explain the choice

What stays City permission would still be required. The city could still take the permission back. Notice and comment are ways to give views; they are different from the power to reject an application.

Another notice change The proposed legal text shortens City Record publication for a hearing notice from 15 days to 6. It also changes newspaper notice rules for franchises—city authorizations for certain public uses. [65]

When changes would begin The revised process would begin March 1, 2027. Applications already submitted before that date would use the earlier rules. [25,65]

Walk through your decision

Grounded What matters to me about sharing public space?

Aligned Which needs should I weigh: access, local participation, time, cost, or others?

Aware Can I explain which hearing, notice and Council powers would change?

Intentional After weighing both processes, which one do I choose, and why?

My choice and reason: _____

Check the sources: [Official explanation and submitted views](#) | [Proposed legal text](#)

How organizations apply for city contracts

Should the city change contractor paperwork and several approval and public review steps?

A neighborhood group wants to run a city-funded tutoring program. Before the city can hire it, the group must complete paperwork and get approvals. Those steps affect the group, the families it serves, and everyone whose tax money helps pay the bill.

Words to know A contract is an agreement to buy goods or services. Procurement means the process of buying them. The Procurement Policy Board, or PPB, sets many city contracting rules.

What happens now The Mayor's contracting office and the Comptroller maintain a detailed questionnaire for contractors. The same required questions apply across contract sizes. Agencies must hold a hearing on their yearly plan for direct-service contracts, such as youth services. The PPB has no required quarterly meeting schedule.

If you vote Yes

Paperwork The PPB could write questionnaire rules that vary by contract size, industry, small-business status or other factors. A separate committee would do this for franchises and concessions.

Approval and review The annual service-contract plan would still be published, but its draft hearing would end. The Mayor could delegate approval of certain contracts over \$5 million, with agency commissioner approval.

Meetings and public comments The PPB would meet at least every three months. A later change would make a public-comment route permanent in city law and let the PPB set which contract values require it.

If you vote No

The existing questionnaire rules and the Mayor and Comptroller's roles would stay. The draft annual service-plan hearing would remain required. Current limits on delegated approvals would stay, and this proposal would not require quarterly PPB meetings or make its later public-comment changes.

Plain-language explanation of the proposed rules. Sources [26,65]. Further details and dates follow the example.

Check the sources: [Read the official explanation](#)

A small nonprofit and a large contractor



FICTIONAL EXAMPLES • POSSIBILITIES, NOT FORECASTS • AI ILLUSTRATION

The picture shows a fictional tutoring program applying for city work. Also imagine a large company seeking a city contract. The same process must serve families and protect public money.

YES best case The board fits forms to contract size while keeping useful ownership and conflict disclosures. Staff check those answers and prices. The small program can compete without needless paperwork; large firms still face meaningful review.

YES worst case If rewritten rules omit important ownership details, a large company's link to an official's relative could go unnoticed. Weak checking lets an inflated price pass. Favoritism and fraud would still be unlawful.

NO best case Fuller disclosures help reviewers identify who owns the large company and spot a possible conflict. They check prices and question the deal before awarding money. Public review also informs the agency's service plan.

NO worst case The large company can afford staff to handle detailed forms while the small program gives up. Reviewers file answers without checking them. A connected contractor still wins; paperwork alone has not protected the public.

For your community conversation What ownership facts, price checks and public records would expose favoritism under either set of rules?

Check the sources: [Check the proposal behind these examples](#)

Think through your choice

Different views to consider

Why some support it NYC Votes summarizes support for forms that better fit small businesses and nonprofits. Citizens Union supports the proposal as a way to simplify city contracting. [26,30]

Why some question it NYC Votes reports that D9 Harlem Votes questions reducing public review. Citizens Union supports the proposal while also calling for care in keeping disclosure questions that help prevent corruption. [26,30]

These are outside views. RESET does not recommend a Yes or No vote.

Details that help explain the choice

Why the form matters The questions help the city learn about a contractor. The proposal gives rulemaking bodies authority over required information; it does not itself print a final, shorter questionnaire.

A separate public comment change From October 2030, the PPB could set the contract-value threshold for required public comments. The legal text requires notice and a comment period of at least seven days for covered contracts. Exceptions also apply. [65]

When changes would begin Quarterly PPB meetings would begin January 1, 2027. The contract public-comment changes would begin October 1, 2030. Other changes would begin when voter approval is officially certified; new questionnaire rules would then need to be adopted. [26,65]

Walk through your decision

Grounded What do I want public contracting to accomplish?

Aligned Which needs matter most here: service, useful disclosure, manageable forms, public participation, or others?

Aware Can I explain both the paperwork changes and the review changes?

Intentional Do I support this package of changes? What is my reason?

My choice and reason: _____

Check the sources: [Official explanation and submitted views](#) | [Proposed legal text](#)

Street projects city land and office space

Should the city change three different approval systems in one proposal?

Think about three places: a crossing that may need safety work, a small city-owned lot, and a building where city employees might work. This question changes rules for all three. Your vote covers the whole package.

Words to know City land means property the city owns. Development rights are permission to build a certain amount of floor space. A landmark may have unused rights that can be sold for use elsewhere under city rules.

What happens now Major street projects have notice and consultation steps. Many city land sales or leases go through a longer public review, including a Council role. City office acquisitions have a separate hearing and approval process involving the Planning Commission and Council.

If you vote Yes

Street projects Clarify when urgent safety work can begin before local notice. Missed agency consultations would not invalidate a project. The transportation agency would still have duties to notify or present the work.

Certain city property Allow shorter review for qualifying small lots and landmark development rights, with the Planning Commission making the final decision instead of the Council. Make a program for selling undevelopable lots to adjacent owners permanent.

City offices Remove the Planning Commission and Council hearing and approval steps. The city's administrative agency would certify the acquisition and provide required notices.

If you vote No

The existing street consultation rules would stay. Existing land-review requirements would stay for the property categories this proposal addresses. The separate hearing and approval process for city office space would remain. A No vote would keep these processes; it would not prohibit street work, land transactions or office leases.

Plain-language explanation of the proposed rules. Sources [27,65]. Further details and dates follow the example.

Check the sources: [Read the official explanation](#)

Three places and one ballot question



FICTIONAL EXAMPLES • POSSIBILITIES, NOT FORECASTS • AI ILLUSTRATION

The crossing, qualifying city lot and office space are fictional. One vote covers all three subjects. Here is how the changed or existing processes could serve people—or fail them.

YES best case Reliable safety data supports quicker crossing work. Remaining reviews help secure fair value for a qualifying lot. Staff compare office rents and choose a sound lease. Fewer steps save time while officials explain their decisions.

YES worst case If remaining checks fail, officials overlook an access problem at the crossing, steer a qualifying lot deal toward an ally, or choose an overpriced office lease. The removed Council approval powers offer no extra stop for those property deals.

NO best case Street consultation catches an access problem. Public land review exposes an unfavorable deal, and Council review challenges an overpriced office lease. Officials use their existing powers to seek better terms for the community.

NO worst case Procedural disputes delay a needed crossing. Elsewhere, an official uses a property approval role to favor an ally or obstruct a sound office lease for political leverage. The formal steps remain, but do not ensure fair decisions.

For your community conversation Which review step adds useful protection, which can be abused, and what check remains if that power is removed?

Check the sources: [Check the proposal behind these examples](#)

Think through your choice

Different views to consider

Why some support it Citizens Union supports the package as a way to simplify approvals. NYC Votes reports support for faster street work and putting qualifying city property to use. [27,30]

Why some question it Citizens Union also objects to grouping different subjects into one vote. NYC Votes summarizes concerns about the reduced local review in parts of the package. [27,30]

These are outside views. RESET does not recommend a Yes or No vote.

Details that help explain the choice

Which land qualifies The proposed small-lot category is no more than 10,000 square feet and excludes individual landmarks. Landmark development rights are a separate category. The shorter review cannot be used if the project requires an environmental impact statement—a detailed environmental study. [65]

What review remains For qualifying land transactions, the community board and Borough President would review at the same time. The Planning Commission would make the final decision. For city offices, advance local notices and later notice to the Council and Comptroller would remain. A separate hearing after a property approval is more than two years old would end. [65]

When changes would begin Most changes would begin when approval is certified. Permanent authority for selling qualifying undevelopable lots to adjacent owners without an auction would begin December 31, 2030. [27,65]

Walk through your decision

Grounded What matters to me about safety, public property and public spending?

Aligned Which goals apply to each of the three parts?

Aware Have I considered who decides and who can respond in each part?

Intentional Taking all three parts together, what is my choice, and why?

My choice and reason: _____

Check the sources: [Official explanation and submitted views](#) | [Proposed legal text](#)

Where building applications go

Should building applications use one citywide system, with more authorized reviewers and a change in waterfront permitting?

Imagine renovating a building. The owner may need to send plans to several city agencies. The people doing the work need clear instructions. People living nearby need the work to follow the rules. This question changes parts of that application system.

Words to know A permit is official permission to do particular work. The Department of Buildings, or DOB, reviews and enforces many construction rules. Some waterfront structures, such as piers, have a separate permitting arrangement.

What happens now Applicants submit documents through separate agency systems. The Charter limits which Buildings officials can exercise certain approval powers. Small Business Services handles construction permits for certain waterfront structures.

If you vote Yes

One application system Require Buildings to develop a shared permit system by 2030. All city agencies would have to use it for construction permit applications and approvals.

Who can approve Allow additional qualified Buildings officials to exercise approval powers. The proposal also updates borough officials' titles in the Charter.

Waterfront structures Move responsibility for certain waterfront construction permits from Small Business Services to Buildings. Existing permits and approvals would stay in place.

If you vote No

Separate agency systems would remain under the present Charter arrangements. Existing limits on approval authority would stay. Small Business Services would keep the waterfront construction responsibilities covered by this proposal. This question would not require the shared system or those transfers of authority.

Plain-language explanation of the proposed rules. Sources [28,65]. Further details and dates follow the example.

Check the sources: [Read the official explanation](#)

A renovation application with several stops



FICTIONAL EXAMPLES • POSSIBILITIES, NOT FORECASTS • AI ILLUSTRATION

A fictional owner, contractor, reviewers and neighbor discuss building plans. The waterfront recalls a separate permitting change. Consider both good administration and poor administration under each choice.

YES best case One system shows who has each application. Qualified reviewers coordinate, keep records and apply safety rules. The owner repeats less paperwork, the project moves sooner, and the neighbor can get a clear answer.

YES worst case If supervision and records are weak, a connected builder receives rushed approvals while incomplete plans get little scrutiny. Staff blame the new system when neighbors ask questions. Centralizing forms has not ensured accountable decisions.

NO best case Separate agency reviewers catch a problem others missed. Staff with waterfront experience identify a hazard in covered pier work. The applicant corrects the plans before receiving the required permission.

NO worst case Separate offices lose documents or pass responsibility back and forth. A needed repair stalls. Connected firms find their way through while an ordinary owner cannot get an answer. Multiple review points have not ensured equal treatment.

For your community conversation Can an applicant or neighbor trace each approval and challenge unequal treatment, with one system or several?

Check the sources: [Check the proposal behind these examples](#)

Think through your choice

Different views to consider

Why some support it Citizens Union supports the proposal as a way to make construction permitting easier to navigate. NYC Votes summarizes support for coordinating applications across agencies. [28,30]

Why some question it NYC Votes reports that opponents, including D9 Harlem Votes, want clearer arrangements for public information, oversight and responsibility under the proposed system. [28]

These are outside views. RESET does not recommend a Yes or No vote.

Details that help explain the choice

A system built over time The hub would have to be developed by 2030. It would not appear on Election Day. The proposal directs a change in the system, while its practical design and rollout would come later.

The waterfront provision The transfer concerns covered waterfront structures and construction responsibilities. It does not transfer every waterfront government function. Existing permits and approvals would remain valid. [65]

When changes would begin Most provisions would begin when approval is certified. The waterfront transfer would begin December 31, 2030, or when a new waterfront-structure code takes effect, whichever comes first. [28,65]

Walk through your decision

Grounded What matters to me about construction and the places people live or work?

Aligned What do I want from a permit process: clear steps, safety, timely answers, public information, or other needs?

Aware Can I explain the hub, approval authority and waterfront changes separately?

Intentional Do I support these changes together? What is my reason?

My choice and reason: _____

Check the sources: [Official explanation and submitted views](#) | [Proposed legal text](#)

How the city plans savings for hard times

Should the city adopt a reserve target and a published method for deciding deposits?

In a difficult year, the city may collect less tax money while people still need services. Saving beforehand can help. But money saved today is also money that cannot be spent today. This proposal asks what rules should guide that planning.

Words to know A reserve is money set aside for later. The Rainy Day Fund already exists. Tax revenue means money the city receives from taxes. A target is the amount the city aims to hold; a deposit is money added to the fund.

What happens now The city has a Rainy Day Fund but no reserve target or deposit method required by this proposal. Officials decide deposits through the budget. State law already limits how much may be withdrawn without a special mayoral certification.

If you vote Yes

A savings target Set a goal of holding at least 12% of the previous year's tax revenue in the Rainy Day Fund and other reserves identified in the city's method.

A deposit method Require a published method for calculating deposits when reserves are below target. Deposits would depend on that method and an approved budget; the rules allow flexibility, including years with no deposit.

Withdrawals Put the existing state withdrawal limit into city law permanently: no more than half the fund in a year unless the Mayor certifies a compelling financial need.

If you vote No

The Rainy Day Fund would remain. Officials could still add money through approved budgets. This proposal's 12% target, required deposit method and permanent city-law withdrawal provision would not be added. Existing law, including applicable state withdrawal rules, would continue.

Plain-language explanation of the proposed rules. Sources [29,65]. Further details and dates follow the example.

Check the sources: [Read the official explanation](#)

A savings target is different from a yearly deposit



FICTIONAL EXAMPLES • POSSIBILITIES, NOT FORECASTS • AI ILLUSTRATION

The panels show stronger and weaker financial years. If last year's tax income were \$100, a 12% target means \$12 in qualifying reserves, not a \$12 yearly deposit.

YES best case Officials publish a clear deposit method, identify reserves that can meet needs, and budget savings in stronger years. The target guides preparation while budgets also fund current services. Residents can follow the amounts.

YES worst case Officials promote the 12% target but count reserves committed to other purposes and repeatedly make no deposit. Residents expect more usable savings than are available. A target on paper gives false confidence.

NO best case The existing fund remains. Responsible leaders save through the budget and pursue a stronger savings policy through later action. They explain how they balance current services and future needs. A No vote itself would not create that stronger policy.

NO worst case Leaders repeatedly postpone saving under current rules. When tax income falls, usable reserves are too small to cushion the gap, and services face cuts. Keeping flexibility has not produced preparation.

For your community conversation What money would really be available in a downturn, and how would residents check both saving and current needs?

Check the sources: [Check the proposal behind these examples](#)

Think through your choice

Different views to consider

Why some support it Citizens Union supports the proposal as a step toward clearer savings rules, while noting that annual deposits would not be guaranteed and other reserves could count. [30]

Why some question it The Citizens Budget Commission opposes it. The group prefers a 16% target and stronger deposit requirements, and questions counting reserves that serve other purposes. These are the group's preferred policies, not RESET recommendations. [31]

These are outside views. RESET does not recommend a Yes or No vote.

Details that help explain the choice

How the method would be made The budget office would prepare it with the Comptroller. There would be public notice, comments and a hearing before the final method. The first final method is due May 1, 2027, with an update by May 1, 2030 and at least every four years after that. [65]

What the number means 12% describes the proposed minimum target relative to last year's tax income. It is not a new tax rate or a rule to add 12% every year. Other qualifying reserves may count. The withdrawal exception would require the Mayor to certify a compelling financial need. [65]

When changes would begin The Charter changes would begin when voter approval is officially certified. The first published final deposit method would be due May 1, 2027. [29,65]

Walk through your decision

Grounded What matters to me about services today and preparation for difficult years?

Aligned How do I weigh present needs, future protection and flexibility?

Aware Can I explain the difference between a target, a deposit and a withdrawal?

Intentional Do I support these rules as written? What is my reason?

My choice and reason: _____

Check the sources: [Official explanation and submitted views](#) | [Proposed legal text](#)

Check the sources: [Citizens Union support](#) | [Citizens Budget Commission opposition](#)

Now meet the people seeking the bench

The proposals ask you to choose rules. Judicial elections ask you to choose people who will apply the law. This section explains the offices, introduces every candidate on the posted Brooklyn list, and links sources for their experience.

Why a judge's work may matter to you

Imagine receiving court papers about a bill you believe you already paid. You would want time to explain, clear rules, and a decision based on the evidence. Depending on their assignment, judges also hear disputes about homes, families, businesses and criminal charges.

Start with your own address

Brooklyn is also called Kings County in court and election records. All Brooklyn voters have boroughwide Supreme Court and Civil Court contests. Some voters also have a Civil Court district contest. This edition covers eight contests and nineteen different people on the posted list. [52]

[VIEW YOUR OFFICIAL SAMPLE BALLOT](#)

The same approach for every candidate

Every person has a real photograph, party lines, law school, New York admission year, career background and sources. Campaign statements describe the candidate's own account. Outside assessments identify the group, date and office. These are source findings, not RESET judgments.

Published information varies by person and by source. The amount of material available is not a measure of a candidate's ability. This guide gives no scores, rankings or endorsements.

A question for every candidate

What experience prepares you for this court, and how would you give a fair hearing to someone who does not have a lawyer?

Know the court before the candidate

Office	What it does	An everyday example
New York Supreme Court justice	A state trial judge with broad authority over civil matters and, in NYC criminal terms, felony cases. New York's highest state court is the Court of Appeals.	A divorce, foreclosure, major injury lawsuit, or felony prosecution.
New York City Civil Court judge	The court handles money claims up to \$50,000. It has small claims and housing parts. Elected judges may be assigned to other courts.	A disputed debt or a claim that a contractor did not finish paid work.

Supreme Court justices serve 14-year elected terms. Elected Civil Court judges serve 10-year terms. Housing Court judges have a separate appointment process. An elected office and a judge's actual assignment can differ. [2–4]

Understand the different legal jobs

Judge Presides over cases and makes rulings under the law.

Law clerk or court attorney Helps a judge research legal questions, prepare decisions and manage cases. The judge makes the court's ruling.

Court attorney referee A court lawyer who can conduct hearings or decide assigned matters under the authority given for that assignment.

Lawyer in practice Represents clients, advises them and may negotiate settlements or argue cases. That is different from deciding a case as the judge.

One person can have several party lines

A name printed on two or three party lines still belongs to one person. This is called cross endorsement. Choose each person only once, and follow the instructions on your ballot. Party labels identify ballot nominations; they do not tell you how a judge will decide a case. [52]

Brooklyn contests at a glance

Find the contest name on your official sample ballot. “Up to four” means you may select as many as four different people in that contest. It does not mean you must choose four. [52]

Contest	Who votes	Maximum choices
Supreme Court — 2nd Judicial District	All Brooklyn voters	Up to 4
Civil Court — countywide	All Brooklyn voters	Up to 4
Civil Court — District 2	Voters in District 2	1
Civil Court — District 3	Voters in District 3	1
Civil Court — District 4	Voters in District 4	Up to 2
Civil Court — District 6	Voters in District 6	Up to 2
Civil Court — District 7	Voters in District 7	1
Civil Court — District 8	Voters in District 8	1

District 4 and District 6 each fill two seats on the posted list. Districts 2, 3, 7 and 8 each fill one. Only vote in the district contest actually printed on your ballot. A ZIP code or neighborhood name alone may not identify your court district.

[FIND YOUR ADDRESS AND VIEW SAMPLE BALLOT](#)

The Board of Elections list is printed September 11, 2026, and marked tentative and subject to change. This report covers its Brooklyn judicial entries. Check the current official sample ballot for updates. [52]

Match names to your ballot

Supreme Court — 2nd Judicial District

Up to 4 choices • Betsey Jean Jacques; Hemalee J. Patel; Sherveal Mimes; Lola Waterman; William D. Spain Jr.

Civil Court — countywide

Up to 4 choices • Danielle A. Noel; Linda Lo Cascio; Celeste Felix; Christine G. Ortiz

Civil Court — District 2

1 choice • Lauren J. Brown-Akowe

Civil Court — District 3

1 choice • Tamara Ortiz

Civil Court — District 4

Up to 2 choices • Anthony W. Vaughn Jr.; Aaron Franklin; Xavier Carr

Civil Court — District 6

Up to 2 choices • Janice P. Purvis; Michelle DeSouza-Forte

Civil Court — District 7

1 choice • Bridget Hamblin

Civil Court — District 8

1 choice • Susan A. Liebman; Etan C. Harris

Betsey appears without a hyphen on the Democratic line and with a hyphen on the Republican and Conservative lines. These entries refer to the same person. Hemalee Patel is listed on the Democratic and Republican lines. William Spain is listed on the Conservative line only. [52]

Supreme Court candidates



Betsey Jean Jacques

Democratic • Republican • Conservative

Law school: Syracuse | New York admission: 2007 [33]

Background A sitting Civil Court judge who joined the bench in 2024. State registration identifies her work in New York County Family Court.

Work in practice Family Court service includes child custody matters. Her professional registration identifies Syracuse University as her law school.

Public information A 2023 City Bar assessment for Civil Court was Approved. That is an earlier assessment for a different elected office.

Sources [66,67,80]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.



Hemalee J. Patel

Democratic • Republican

Law school: Brooklyn | New York admission: 1992 [33]

Background A Civil Court judge since 2025, serving in Kings County Criminal Court. Her earlier work includes serving as general counsel to the NYC Board of Elections.

Work in practice Her published *People v Diaz* decision addresses when a defendant is entitled to a hearing about a temporary order requiring the person to stay away from a home.

Public information The City Bar rated her Approved for Civil Court in October 2024. Her current candidacy is for Supreme Court.

Sources [66,68,81,86]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Supreme Court candidates continued



Sherveal Mimes

Democratic • Republican • Conservative

Law school: Memphis | New York admission: 2010 [33]

Background A sitting Kings County Civil Court judge. Her earlier court work included serving as a court attorney.

Work in practice In *Dudley v Karpenko*, she considered whether a medical malpractice case brought by a person without a lawyer could be dismissed for delay. She denied dismissal and directed a final pretrial conference.

Public information The City Bar rated her Approved for Civil Court countywide in October 2022. Her current candidacy is for Supreme Court.

Sources [4,66,82,100]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.



Lola Waterman

Democratic • Republican • Conservative

Law school: New York Law School | New York admission: 2009 [33]

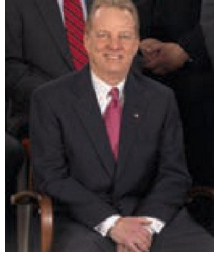
Background A Civil Court judge since 2024. Before joining the bench, she practiced in areas including estate planning, immigration and elder law.

Work in practice In *Powell v Dowler*, she addressed a late response to a lawsuit and whether the complaint stated a legal claim. She declined a default judgment and dismissed the claim against the named defendant.

Public information The City Bar rated her Approved for Civil Court, District 2, in October 2023. Her current candidacy is for Supreme Court.

Sources [66,67,83,87]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Supreme Court candidate continued



William D. Spain Jr.

Conservative

Law school: Vermont | New York admission: 1977 [33]

Background A lawyer with Spain & Spain, P.C., in Mahopac. His party biography describes earlier service as Putnam County attorney and attorney for the Town of Carmel.

Work in practice His background includes private legal practice and advising local government. A 2013 bank report identifies him as the firm's managing partner and a bank board chairman at that time.

Public information Avvo's matched profile shows one client review, dated June 2015, with a five-star score. Its author praises communication and help after an accident. It is a client account of legal service.

Sources [69,88,89]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Connect the experience to the job

Consider the kinds of legal work described, the responsibilities involved and how they relate to the court. Use the same questions for every candidate: Can this person hear each side patiently, apply the law independently and explain a decision clearly?

[CHECK THE NAMES ON YOUR OFFICIAL SAMPLE BALLOT](#)

Countywide Civil Court candidates



Danielle A. Noel

Democratic

Law school: Cardozo | New York admission: 2014 [33]

Background A court attorney referee whose campaign describes work in matrimonial and family law. She attended the University of Pennsylvania before law school.

Work in practice Her campaign says she trains judges and attorneys on implicit bias. A referee's role involves handling assigned court matters under the authority of that position.

Public information Her stated priorities include clearer court information, language access and resources for people representing themselves. These are candidate statements.

Sources [70]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.



Linda Lo Cascio

Democratic

Law school: Brooklyn | New York admission: 1998 [33]

Background A Brooklyn court attorney referee. Her campaign describes experience in private practice, trial work and service to the courts.

Work in practice Her stated background includes eleven years as a court attorney or referee and sixteen years in practice, including work with the Administration for Children's Services.

Public information Her campaign emphasizes patience, accessible courts and mental health and guardianship resources. State registration lists Kings County Surrogate's Court as her employer.

Sources [71]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Countywide Civil Court candidates continued



Celeste Felix

Democratic

Law school: St. John's | New York admission: 2007 [33]

Background A principal law clerk in Kings County Supreme Court, Civil Term. Her campaign describes earlier court attorney roles in Civil and Family Courts.

Work in practice Her work has included preparing cases, drafting legal opinions and helping manage hearings. Her campaign also describes service as a small claims arbitrator since 2022.

Public information Her stated experience includes consumer debt, insurance, contracts, landlord and tenant matters, and child welfare proceedings. These details come from her campaign biography.

Sources [72]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.



Christine G. Ortiz

Democratic

Law school: CUNY | New York admission: 2014 [33]

Background A principal law clerk in Kings County Supreme Court, Civil Term. She earned her undergraduate degree at Columbia University.

Work in practice Her campaign describes court service since 2015 across Criminal, Civil and Supreme Courts. Earlier private practice included commercial litigation, wage theft and family law matters.

Public information Her campaign reports a Qualified finding by the Kings County Judicial Screening Committee. That is a campaign-reported screening result, distinct from the bar notices listed later.

Sources [73]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Civil Court Districts 2 and 3



Lauren J. Brown-Akowe

Democratic

Law school: Texas Southern Thurgood Marshall | New York admission: 2014 [33]

Background A principal law clerk in Kings County Supreme Court, Civil Term. Her campaign describes earlier work in Family and Civil Courts and private practice.

Work in practice She describes researching legal questions, drafting opinions, coordinating cases and helping parties work toward settlements. Earlier practice included estate planning and real estate.

Public information Her stated priorities include clear court procedures, fair treatment and mentoring students. The state attorney entry uses Lauren Janelle Brown, matching her school and admission history.

Sources [74]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.



Tamara Ortiz

Democratic

Law school: Touro | New York admission: 2016 [33]

Background A court professional listed by New York Courts as principal law clerk to Justice Richard Velasquez in Kings County Supreme Court, Civil Term.

Work in practice The court's published rules identify her role in receiving jury materials and proposed verdict sheets. A principal law clerk assists the judge with the legal and practical work of a case.

Public information Official registration uses Tamara Rachelle Ortiz and lists Kings County Supreme Court. The photograph is from a captioned 2018 court event.

Sources [75,90]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Civil Court District 4



Anthony W. Vaughn Jr.

Democratic

Law school: Cincinnati | New York admission: 2000 [33]

Background A lawyer in private practice and a past president of the Brooklyn Bar Association. His campaign identifies his firm as the Law Office of Anthony W. Vaughn, Jr. LLC.

Work in practice His stated practice includes commercial disputes involving real estate, construction, professional liability, financial services and insurance.

Public information His campaign describes mentoring and community service. Holding a bar association office is professional leadership; it is separate from a judicial candidate assessment.

Sources [76]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.



Aaron Franklin

Republican • Conservative

Law school: Cardozo | New York admission: 2017 [33]

Background A lawyer with Franklin Law. His campaign uses the full name Aaron D. Franklin; the ballot uses Aaron Franklin.

Work in practice His stated practice includes civil litigation, business disputes, landlord and tenant cases, and housing matters. He describes earlier training at the Kings County District Attorney's Office.

Public information His campaign emphasizes applying the law and giving tenants, landlords and small businesses a fair hearing. A matched Martindale profile lists no client or peer reviews.

Sources [77,91]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Civil Court District 4 continued



Xavier Carr

Democratic

Law school: Thomas Jefferson | New York admission: 2016 [33]

Background A lawyer whose state registration lists the NYC Office of Technology and Innovation. A July 2026 professional feature describes him as senior counsel.

Work in practice The feature describes private practice and earlier law clerk service to Justices Wavny Toussaint and Kathy King, including legal research and drafting proposed opinions.

Public information His background combines advising government with work inside trial courts. The later section on the nomination process includes reporting that names him and the responses published with it.

Sources [78,92]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Connect the experience to the job

Consider the kinds of legal work described, the responsibilities involved and how they relate to the court. Use the same questions for every candidate: Can this person hear each side patiently, apply the law independently and explain a decision clearly?

[CHECK THE NAMES ON YOUR OFFICIAL SAMPLE BALLOT](#)

Civil Court District 6



Janice P. Purvis

Democratic • Working Families

Law school: New York Law School | New York admission: 2003 [33]

Background A court attorney referee in Kings County Supreme Court. Her campaign describes more than twenty years of court service.

Work in practice She describes overseeing discovery matters, helping resolve disputes about exchanging case information, drafting orders and assisting people in the court's Help Center.

Public information In June 2026, the City Bar and LeGaL each published Approved assessments for Civil Court. The source note explains their different district headings.

Sources [16,17,79]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.



Michelle DeSouza-Forte

Democratic

Law school: Thomas M. Cooley | New York admission: 2009 [33]

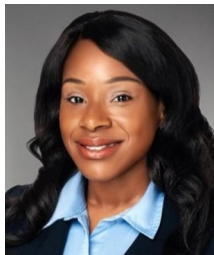
Background A lawyer whose state registration lists the NYC Law Department. Her campaign describes private practice and public service.

Work in practice Her stated background includes wills and estates, real estate, immigration, contracts and civil disputes, including work at Grimaldi & Yeung Law Group.

Public information The City Bar published Approved in June 2026 under Michelle DeSouza. LeGaL listed Failed to Appear under Michelle Desouza. Read the different meanings in the assessment section.

Sources [16,17,84]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Civil Court District 7



Bridget Hamblin

Democratic

Law school: Hofstra | New York admission: 2005 [33]

Background A lawyer with a public service background. A 2025 professional conference biography identifies her as NYC Probation's deputy commissioner for legal affairs and general counsel.

Work in practice That biography describes earlier work as a Bronx assistant district attorney and an FDNY deputy general counsel. It says she oversees legal, legislative and related functions at Probation.

Public information The linked biography gives the date and setting of these roles. The later nomination section includes reporting naming her and the statements published by the reporters.

Sources [85,92,93]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Connect the experience to the job

Consider the kinds of legal work described, the responsibilities involved and how they relate to the court. Use the same questions for every candidate: Can this person hear each side patiently, apply the law independently and explain a decision clearly?

[CHECK THE NAMES ON YOUR OFFICIAL SAMPLE BALLOT](#)

Civil Court District 8



Susan A. Liebman

Democratic

Law school: New York Law School | New York admission: 1992 [33]

Background A principal law clerk with experience in private civil and family practice, according to her candidate questionnaire. State registration lists New York Supreme Court.

Work in practice Her described experience includes work on landlord and tenant, matrimonial and commercial matters. A law clerk helps a judge examine the law and prepare cases and decisions.

Public information In June 2026, the City Bar published Not Approved for Civil Court, District 8. LeGaL published Approved for the same office. These are separate groups' conclusions.

Sources [16,17,94,95]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.



Etan C. Harris

Republican • Conservative

Law school: Syracuse | New York admission: 2010 [33]

Background A lawyer with Harris Legal, PLLC. His firm biography describes representing clients in landlord and tenant disputes and personal injury matters.

Work in practice His stated work includes preparing and trying civil cases and negotiating settlements before trial. State registration confirms his law school and New York admission year.

Public information His campaign describes fairness and the rule of law as priorities. A matched Avvo entry says Not yet reviewed; that records the page's review count.

Sources [96,97,98]; school and admission [33]. Outside assessments follow the profiles.

Read outside assessments in context

There are websites where clients or lawyers can comment on legal services. A judicial bar assessment, a client review, a campaign endorsement and an official court decision answer different questions. None is a RESET rating.

Source	What you can learn	How to read it
Bar association	A group's assessment under its own standards.	Check the date, office, process and exact label.
Client or lawyer directory	Voluntary comments about legal service, or a professional listing.	Check the person's identity and the number and age of reviews.
Campaign or political club	The candidate's priorities, endorsements and self-reported experience.	Identify whose position it is and check supporting records.
Court decision	The facts, legal question, reasoning and order in a specific case.	Read the full decision and any later appeal.

What the labels mean

The City Bar uses Approved and Not Approved. Its June notice says Approved candidates demonstrated the qualifications required for the office. The notice gives no individual explanation for a Not Approved label. [16]

LeGaL evaluates legal qualifications, impartiality and commitment to equal rights for LGBTQ people. Its Failed to Appear label concerns participation in that review process; it is different from Not Approved. [17]

A page with no reviews tells you about that page's coverage. It does not assess the lawyer's work. A small number of favorable or unfavorable comments cannot describe every client's experience.

Dated professional assessments

Candidate	Group date and office	Published result
Sherveal R. Mimes	City Bar • Oct 27, 2022 Civil Court countywide	Approved [100]
Betsey Jean-Jacques	City Bar • Oct 16, 2023 Civil Court countywide	Approved [67]
Lola Waterman	City Bar • Oct 16, 2023 Civil Court District 2	Approved [67]
Hemalee J. Patel	City Bar • Oct 25, 2024 Civil Court countywide	Approved [68]
Janice P. Purvis	City Bar • Jun 11, 2026 Civil Court primary	Approved [16]
Janice P. Purvis	LeGaL • Jun 9, 2026 Civil Court District 6	Approved [17]
Michelle DeSouza	City Bar • Jun 11, 2026 Civil Court primary	Approved [16]
Michelle Desouza	LeGaL • Jun 9, 2026 Civil Court District 6	Failed to Appear [17]
Susan A. Liebman	City Bar • Jun 11, 2026 Civil Court District 8	Not Approved [16]
Susan A. Liebman	LeGaL • Jun 9, 2026 Civil Court District 8	Approved [17]

The City Bar June notice places Purvis and DeSouza under District 5; LeGaL places them under District 6. The November Board of Elections list places Purvis and DeSouza-Forte in District 6. The assessments above retain the groups' names and dates; November contest placement follows the Board. [16,17,52]

Earlier Civil Court assessments are not 2026 Supreme Court assessments. This table includes the original dated notices linked in this edition. It makes no finding about candidates not listed in those notices.

Client review pages and further checking

Three matched directory examples

William D. Spain Avvo lists one five-star client review from June 4, 2015. The reviewer describes help after an accident and praises returned calls and answers to questions. This is a single client account of representation. [89]

Aaron David Franklin Martindale lists a 2017 New York admission, matching his state registration, and displays no client or peer reviews. [91]

Etan C. Harris Avvo identifies Harris Legal and a 2010 New York admission, matching his firm and registration. Its entry says Not yet reviewed. [98]

These examples illustrate what the directories contain. They are not a comparison of the candidates. The search did not establish a comparable client review sample for all nineteen people; this guide therefore does not turn directory stars into a candidate score.

Continue your own research

Use the exact name, law school and New York admission year in a search. Confirm the person before reading a review: people with the same name may work in another state or profession. Court employees may have very different online profiles from lawyers in private practice.

Check the sources: [Avvo Spain entry](#) | [Martindale Franklin entry](#) | [Avvo Harris entry](#)

For all nineteen candidates, the profile sources provide a starting point: official registration plus a court, campaign, professional or reporting source. No directory entry is used here to certify a disciplinary history.

Read a judge's reasoning for yourself

These examples show different kinds of court work by the four sitting judges. They are selected illustrations, not a complete record or a measure of who wins appeals. A procedural ruling decides how a case moves forward; it may not decide who is right in the underlying dispute.

Betsey Jean-Jacques — Family Court A November 25, 2025 appeal, *Matter of B.M.*, identifies her June 2024 custody order. The appeals court dismissed the appeal because the child's adoption made the custody issue academic, meaning it no longer required a decision in that appeal. This was not an appellate ruling on the merits of her order. [80]

Hemalee J. Patel — Criminal Court *People v Diaz*, November 10, 2025, concerned a temporary stay-away order. She denied a requested hearing after finding that the defendant had not shown the kind of protected home or personal interest needed for that hearing. The decision discusses the governing cases and the facts presented. [81]

Sherveal Mimes — Civil Court *Dudley v Karpenko*, October 2, 2025, concerned delay in a medical malpractice suit. She denied dismissal, explaining how Civil Court scheduling rules apply when a person has no lawyer, and required a final pretrial conference. The ruling did not decide the malpractice claim. [82]

Lola Waterman — Civil Court *Powell v Dowler*, March 31, 2025, concerned a late response and the wording of a claim. She declined judgment by default but granted dismissal because the complaint did not state a claim against the employee named as defendant. The decision explains the difference between suing an employer and suing an employee personally. [83]

Ask: What was the legal question? Which facts and rules mattered? What did the order actually require? Follow the linked originals and distinguish the author of a trial decision from judges reviewing it on appeal.

Understand how nominations are made

Supreme Court party nominees are selected at judicial conventions. Civil Court nominations generally involve primaries; when new seats arise after petitioning, party committees can have a role in filling nominations. The selection process and a candidate's legal qualifications are separate subjects. [2,92]

A debate about access to nominations

New York Focus reported September 14, 2026 that six recent Brooklyn Civil Court nominees had used consultant Gregorio Mayers. Its 2026 examples include Xavier Carr, Michelle DeSouza-Forte and Bridget Hamblin. Critics questioned the concentration of influence and transparency around the process. [92]

Mayers denied that candidates were required or directed to hire him for political support, or that hiring him guaranteed a nomination. The party's published response disputed the reporting's framing and defended the consultants and judges. These responses are linked below. [92,99]

Reporting about political contributions

NY1 reported September 15 that DeSouza-Forte had contributed at least \$2,115 to parties or political leaders in its review period. Asked about donations, she directed the reporter to her filings. Hamblin told NY1 she had not donated; NY1 reported finding \$474. The story examines selection practices across the city. [93]

These are attributed reports and responses about the political process. They do not establish that any candidate listed here committed misconduct or that a contribution or consultant relationship determined a nomination. Read the original reporting and responses before drawing a conclusion.

Check the sources: [New York Focus report](#) | [NY1 report](#)

A question to ask across parties

What public information would help voters understand how candidates are selected and how they will remain independent on the bench?

Make your own decision

You can use this page for a proposal or a judicial contest. Use the questions to work toward a choice and a reason you can explain in your own words.

Step	Your response
Grounded	What values or responsibilities matter to me? _____ _____
Aligned	Which priorities apply to this particular choice? _____ _____
Aware	What does each option do? What do I still want to learn? _____ _____
Intentional	What is my choice, and what is my reason? _____ _____

Check your understanding

For a proposal, explain what Yes changes and what No keeps. For a judicial contest, explain what the court does and what experience you learned about the candidates. Then look back at the original source for any detail you want to confirm.

Make a plan to vote

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Early voting runs October 24 through November 1. Early voting hours vary, and your early voting site may differ from your Election Day site. Check the official site before leaving home. [64]

CHECK YOUR POLL SITE AND SAMPLE BALLOT

My voting day and time: _____

My correct voting location: _____

A conversation worth having

Try asking: What does this choice do? What matters to you about it? What helped you reach your decision? You can learn from someone's reasons even when your choices differ.

Questions or a community workshop: Pastor Reginald Lee Bachus
reggie@reggiebachus.com

Sources and further reading

Numbers match the references in this guide. Links open the source publications. Source numbers are retained across borough editions where the material is shared; gaps are intentional. Checked October 23, 2026.

[2] [New York City Bar judicial election guide](#)

Court structure, selection and terms. May 12, 2025.

[3] [New York Courts Civil Court overview](#)

Current court authority, including \$50,000 civil claims.

[4] [New York Courts Civil Court judges](#)

Judicial assignments and Civil Court roster.

[16] [City Bar primary assessments](#)

June 11, 2026. Original notice; district heading discrepancy explained in this guide.

[17] [LeGaL primary assessments](#)

June 9, 2026. Original ratings, participation labels and criteria.

[25] [NYC Votes proposal 1](#)

Official explanation and summaries of submitted arguments.

[26] [NYC Votes proposal 2](#)

Official explanation and summaries of submitted arguments.

[27] [NYC Votes proposal 3](#)

Official explanation and summaries of submitted arguments.

[28] [NYC Votes proposal 4](#)

Official explanation and summaries of submitted arguments.

[29] [NYC Votes proposal 5](#)

Official explanation and summaries of submitted arguments.

[30] [Citizens Union positions](#)

October 1, 2026. Supports all five proposals with stated reservations.

[31] [Citizens Budget Commission position](#)

October 21, 2026. Opposes proposal 5 and explains preferred savings rules.

Sources and further reading

Numbers match the references in this guide. Links open the source publications. Source numbers are retained across borough editions where the material is shared; gaps are intentional. Checked October 23, 2026.

[33] [New York State attorney registration dataset](#)

Official school and New York admission data. Queried by name; does not certify case experience or disciplinary history.

[37] [Commission on Judicial Conduct](#)

Official public determinations; confidential matters are not public findings.

[38] [Robing Room About page](#)

Explains its courtroom review service and federal focus.

[51] [Commission on Government Efficiency final report](#)

July 23, 2026. The proposing commission's explanation and rationale; it supports the changes it proposed.

[52] [NYC Board of Elections contest list](#)

November 3, 2026 list printed September 11, marked tentative. Brooklyn judicial entries on PDF pages 20, 27 and 28.

[64] [NYC Votes 2026 general election guide](#)

Official election dates and voting information.

[65] [Full proposed Charter amendments](#)

Adopted July 23, 2026. Proposed legal changes for all five questions, including effective dates.

[66] [amNewYork Supreme Court nominations](#)

August 7, 2026. Background and candidate photographs by Orlande Fleury.

[67] [City Bar general election assessments 2023](#)

October 16, 2023. Historical Civil Court assessments.

[68] [City Bar general election assessments 2024](#)

October 25, 2024. Historical Patel Civil Court assessment.

[69] [Putnam County Conservative Party biography](#)

Party source for William Spain's private practice, government roles and party chairmanship.

[70] [Danielle Noel campaign biography](#)

Candidate statements and photograph. The website describes the primary campaign.

Sources and further reading

Numbers match the references in this guide. Links open the source publications. Source numbers are retained across borough editions where the material is shared; gaps are intentional. Checked October 23, 2026.

[71] [Linda Lo Cascio campaign](#)

Candidate biography, experience and photograph.

[72] [Celeste Felix campaign](#)

Candidate account of court work, arbitration and photograph.

[73] [Christine Ortiz campaign biography](#)

Candidate background, reported screening result and photograph.

[74] [Lauren Brown-Akowe campaign](#)

Candidate experience, priorities and photograph.

[75] [Justice Richard Velasquez official court page](#)

Lists Tamara R. Ortiz as principal law clerk; court rules updated July 3, 2025.

[76] [Anthony Vaughn campaign biography](#)

Candidate account of practice and Brooklyn Bar Association service; photograph on campaign site.

[77] [Aaron Franklin campaign](#)

Candidate background, professional name and photograph.

[78] [NYC Newswire Xavier Carr feature](#)

July 10, 2026, updated July 11. Supportive professional feature; photograph PHAATS PHOTOS / ROGER ARCHER.

[79] [Janice Purvis campaign](#)

Candidate experience and photograph cropped from a campaign endorsement graphic.

[80] [Matter of B.M. v Administration for Children's Services](#)

November 25, 2025. Appeal from a Jean-Jacques Family Court order dismissed as academic.

[81] [People v Diaz](#)

November 10, 2025. Patel decision, 2025 NY Slip Op 51760(U).

[82] [Dudley v Karpenko](#)

October 2, 2025. Mimes decision, 2025 NY Slip Op 51714(U).

Sources and further reading

Numbers match the references in this guide. Links open the source publications. Source numbers are retained across borough editions where the material is shared; gaps are intentional. Checked October 23, 2026.

[83] [Powell v Dowler](#)

March 31, 2025. Waterman decision, 2025 NY Slip Op 50447(U).

[84] [Michelle DeSouza campaign biography](#)

Candidate account of legal practice and education; photograph on campaign site.

[85] [APPA 2025 NYC training conference biographies](#)

Dated professional biography and headshot of Bridget Hamblin.

[86] [Bklyner Patel professional background](#)

May 24, 2021. Reporting on Board of Elections general counsel appointment.

[87] [Lola Waterman candidate questionnaire](#)

Earlier candidate statement hosted by Lambda Independent Democrats of Brooklyn.

[88] [Tompkins Financial 2013 annual report](#)

PDF page 13, printed page 23. Caption identifies William D. Spain Jr. third from left in the front row; historical photograph and professional roles.

[89] [Avvo William Spain profile](#)

Matched law firm, Vermont law school and 1977 New York admission. Review snapshot discussed in text.

[90] [Daily Bulletin court event photographs](#)

December 14, 2018, page 15. Tamara Ortiz appears at right beside Justice Velasquez. Photographs by Rob Abruzzese.

[91] [Martindale Aaron David Franklin entry](#)

Matched professional name and 2017 admission. No client or peer reviews displayed.

[92] [New York Focus nomination process report](#)

Chris Bragg, September 14, 2026. Reporting, critics' views and Mayers's and party responses.

[93] [NY1 judicial selection report](#)

Courtney Gross, September 15, 2026. Reporting on parties, nominations and contributions.

[94] [Susan Liebman candidate questionnaire](#)

Candidate's account hosted by Lambda Independent Democrats of Brooklyn.

Sources and further reading

Numbers match the references in this guide. Links open the source publications. Source numbers are retained across borough editions where the material is shared; gaps are intentional. Checked October 23, 2026.

[95] [PoliticsNY Susan Liebman profile](#)

Earlier candidate background and photograph.

[96] [Harris Legal Etan Harris biography](#)

Firm's account of practice and photograph.

[97] [Etan Harris campaign](#)

Candidate background and stated priorities.

[98] [Avvo Etan Harris entry](#)

Matched firm and 2010 New York admission; entry says Not yet reviewed.

[99] [Brooklyn Democratic Party response](#)

September 2026. Party statement disputing reporting about nomination practices.

[100] [City Bar general election assessments 2022](#)

October 27, 2022. Historical Mimes Civil Court countywide assessment.

Image credits and research notes

All nineteen candidates have photographs in the same size and neutral layout. Jean-Jacques, Patel, Mimes and Waterman photographs are by Orlande Fleury in amNewYork [66]. Spain is cropped from the captioned Tompkins Financial 2013 annual report group photograph [88]. Ortiz's photograph is from a captioned December 2018 Daily Bulletin court event, by Rob Abruzzese [90]. These two photographs are historical.

Noel, Lo Cascio, Felix, Christine Ortiz, Brown-Akowe, Vaughn, Franklin, Purvis and DeSouza-Forte photographs come from their campaign sites [70–74,76,77,79,84]. Hamblin's headshot is from the APPA 2025 conference [85]. Liebman's photograph is from PoliticsNY [95]. Harris's is from his firm [96]. Carr's photograph is credited PHAATS PHOTOS / ROGER ARCHER in NYC Newswire [78]. Crops remove surrounding people or campaign lettering where possible; they do not change the person's appearance.

The cover and five proposal scenes are AI generated illustrations of fictional people and situations. They are not photographs of actual candidates, projects or predicted outcomes. Candidate photographs retain their original source rights; separate permissions may apply.

School and New York admission years were checked against the state attorney registration dataset [33]. Name forms include Olufunmilola O. Waterman for Lola Waterman, Lauren Janelle Brown for Brown-Akowe, and Tamara Rachelle Ortiz for Tamara Ortiz. This is a dated educational guide, not a complete audit of cases or professional histories. No candidate was contacted.

The posted Board of Elections list [52] determines the nineteen-person roster and party lines. Campaign websites may still discuss primary races. A former primary opponent or an earlier campaign page does not change the November roster. Check your current official sample ballot by address.

[VIEW YOUR OFFICIAL SAMPLE BALLOT](#)

Share the guide and keep the credit

Prepared by Pastor Reginald Lee Bachus

RESET brings practical education to the choices people face in their lives and communities. This guide is part of that work: clear explanations, linked sources, thoughtful questions and room for people to decide for themselves.

For your church or community

Invite Pastor Reginald Lee Bachus for voter education workshops, facilitated conversations, or a discussion about a custom community report. Contact him to discuss scope, availability, fees, and permissions.

reggie@reggiebachus.com

reggiebachus.com

Free to read and share with credit

You may share this complete, unchanged guide at no charge for noncommercial education. Keep the author's name, RESET branding, date, source links and credits intact. For adaptations, rebranding, resale, sponsored editions or other commercial use, request written permission.

Suggested credit

When you refer people to this guide

NYC Ballot Proposals and Brooklyn Judicial Elections 2026. Prepared by Pastor Reginald Lee Bachus for RESET. October 23, 2026. reggiebachus.com.

Rights and source material

© 2026 Reginald Lee Bachus. Rights are reserved in original human-authored material and the selection and arrangement of this guide to the extent protected by law, subject to the sharing permission above. This notice does not claim ownership of public facts, government legal text, third-party photographs, source publications, or AI-generated images. Third-party rights remain with their owners; this permission does not grant separate rights to their material.

Please link to the dated guide when sharing. Keep quotations in context and credit the original source of any assessment or opinion. RESET and Pastor Reginald Lee Bachus give no candidate endorsements or Yes or No recommendations in this guide.