

Happy New Year? Taking Stock of Ethics and Corruption In New York City As 2025 Begins

The year 2025 could prove pivotal for the future of ethics and honest government in New York City. Federal and state prosecutors are pursuing multiple high-profile corruption cases involving the City's leadership. A federal bribery trial against the sitting Mayor is scheduled for April. A new presidential administration with a contentious stance on the rule of law is about to take office. Compounding the stakes, 2025 is also an election year, with the entire City Government, including the mayor, up for election.

Over the past three years, reports and investigations into ethical misconduct at City Hall have surged to levels not seen in decades. It is critical that the media, civic organizations, and the public neither ignore nor normalize corruption and pay-to-play practices during this consequential year.

To underscore the gravity of the situation and illustrate the unprecedented challenges New Yorkers now face, Citizens Union presents a comparison of misconduct across mayoral administrations from the past 35 years, encompassing all five mayors of New York City's "modern era": Adams, de Blasio, Bloomberg, Giuliani, and Dinkins.

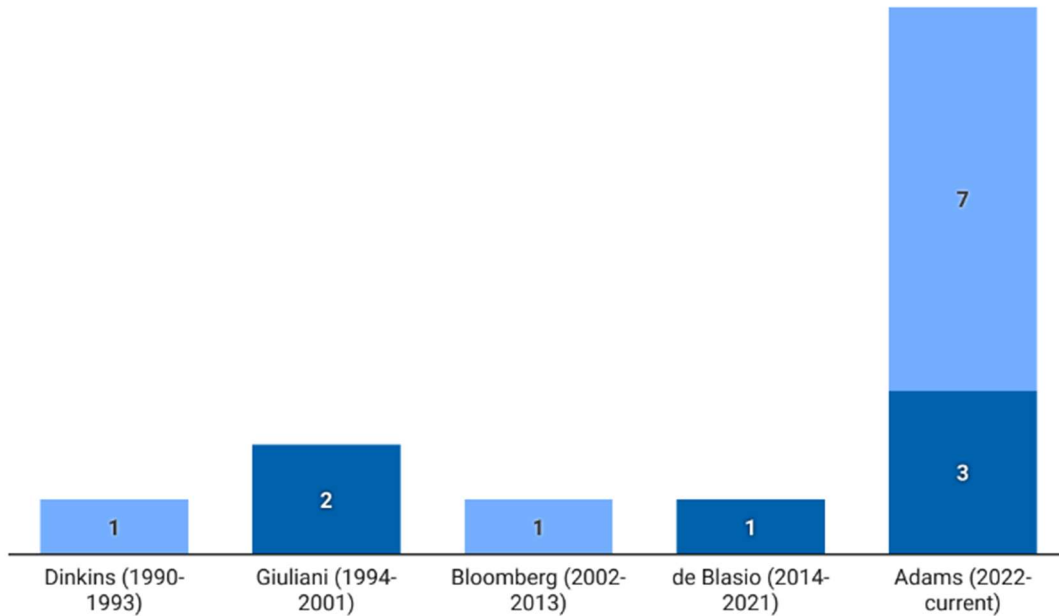
The following list includes senior City officials - top City Hall staff and agency heads - who were indicted by federal or state prosecutors, convicted in court, or resigned following an investigation into ethical misconduct. It excludes instances of ethical misconduct and conflicts of interest where no formal law enforcement inquiry has been reported.

While low-level corruption cases and investigations are common in New York City government, instances where high-ranking officials are indicted or resign due to ethics-related investigations are relatively rare. Over the past 35 years, each mayoral administration experienced one or two such incidents. In contrast, the current administration has faced 10 cases within just three years.

Senior New York City Officials Involved in Ethics and Corruption Scandals

Top City Hall staff and agency heads who were indicted by federal or state prosecutors, convicted by the court, or resigned following an investigation into ethical misconduct, per mayoral administration.

■ Indictments or Convictions
■ Resignations Under Investigation



Excludes instances of ethical misconduct and conflicts of interest where no formal law enforcement inquiry has been reported.

Chart: Citizens Union • Created with Datawrapper

The recent surge in high-level ethical misconduct highlights the urgent need for reforms in New York City's ethics laws, conflict-of-interest rules, and appointment procedures for senior officials. In 2025, lawmakers, policymakers, and the two charter revision commissions—one created by the mayor and the other by the City Council—have a pivotal opportunity to implement these critical reforms.

The latest surge in high-level ethical misconduct draws attention to the need for reforms in New York City's ethics laws, conflicts of interest rules, and appointment procedures for senior officials. 2025 offers lawmakers, policymakers, and the two charter revision commissions (mayoral and council-led commissions) a prime opportunity to tackle necessary reforms.



Adams Administration (2022 – Current)

1. MAYOR ERIC ADAMS - INDICTED FOR CORRUPTION

What: According to the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Mayor Adams received gifts totaling over \$100,000 during his time as Brooklyn Borough President and a mayoral candidate, sought illegal donations from the Turkish government and foreign citizens, defrauded the Public Campaign Finance system, and then pressured FDNY officials to provide permits for a new Turkish consulate building.

When: Indicted in September 2024

Result: Adams to stand trial in April 2025.

Read more: [New York City Mayor Eric Adams Charged With Bribery And Campaign Finance Offenses](#)

2. CHIEF ADVISER TO THE MAYOR - INDICTED FOR BRIBERY AND MONEY LAUNDERING

What: According to the Manhattan District Attorney, top Adams advisor Ingrid Lewis-Martin pressured city officials to expedite DOB permits to benefit several businessmen in exchange for \$100,000 in bribes, used by her son to buy a Porsche. According to press reports, Lewis-Martin might also be the subject of a DA investigation into the City's leasing of commercial properties.

When: Resigned and indicted in December 2024.

Result: Lewis-Martin pleaded not guilty. Trial date not yet set.

Read more: [Mayor Adams' Longtime Top Aide Ingrid Lewis-Martin Indicted in Alleged Bribery and Money-Laundering Scheme](#); [New Adams Administration Inquiry Focuses on City Leases](#)

3. COMMISSIONER OF BUILDINGS - INDICTED FOR BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

What: According to the Manhattan District Attorney, Department of Buildings Commissioner Eric Ulrich provided access and favors to people with business before the City in exchange for various gifts totaling over \$150,000 during his time as the Buildings Commissioner, Advisor to the Mayor, and as Council Member. He was charged with 16 counts of bribery, conspiracy, and filing false financial information alongside six other businessmen.


When: Resigned in November 2022, indicted in September 2023.

Result: Case pending – Ulrich pleaded not guilty.

Read more: [Former Buildings Chief Accused of Trading Favors for \\$150,000 in Bribes](#)

4. DEPUTY MAYOR FOR PUBLIC SAFETY - RESIGNED FOLLOWING FEDERAL RAIDS

What: Federal agents raided the homes and seized the phones of Deputy Mayor for Public Safety Philip Banks, his brother, School Chancellor David Banks, and his other brother, consultant Terence Banks, in what was reported to be an investigation into the



steering of millions of dollars worth of City contracts to Terence Banks' clients. He resigned a month later. In 2014, Banks abruptly resigned as NYPD Chief of Department and was later labeled an unindicted co-conspirator in a massive bribery case in NYPD ranks. He was never charged.

When: Raided by the FBI in September 2024, resigned in October 2024.

Result: No charges have been filed yet.

Read more: [Firm Run by Brother of Top NYC Officials Is Focus of Bribery Inquiry](#)

5. SCHOOLS CHANCELLOR – RESIGNED FOLLOWING FEDERAL RAIDS

What: Federal agents raided the homes and seized the phones of Schools Chancellor David Banks, his partner, First Deputy Mayor Sheena Wright, and his two brothers, Philip and Terence Banks, as part of the same investigation into contracts awarded to Terence Banks' clients. Press reports noted that clients also received contracts from the Department of Education, which might have violated the City's conflicts of interest laws. Banks sought to retire at the end of 2024 but was forced to resign two months earlier.

When: Raided by the FBI in September 2024, resigned in October 2024.

Result: No charges have been filed yet.

Read more: [NYC Schools Chancellor David Banks to step down amid federal probe; A Tech Firm Ditched a Power Lobbyist — and Called on the Schools Chancellor's Brother](#)

6. FIRST DEPUTY MAYOR - RESIGNED FOLLOWING FEDERAL RAIDS

What: Federal agents raided the homes and seized the phones of First Deputy Mayor Sheena Wright, along with her partner's Schools Chancellor David Banks and his two brothers, as part of the same investigation. All three City officials later resigned, which was attributed to Mayor Adams' efforts to "clean house" at the urge of Governor Hochul. However, it remains unclear if Wright is involved in this case or other investigations.

When: Raided by the FBI in September 2024, resigned in October 2024.

Result: No charges have been filed yet.

Read more: [Top Deputy Mayor to Eric Adams Resigns, Intensifying Wave of Departures](#)

7. POLICE COMMISSIONER – RESIGNED FOLLOWING FEDERAL RAIDS

What: According to media reports, the U.S. Attorney and the IRS are investigating a potential corruption scheme run by James Caban, a former police officer who is also the twin brother of NYPD Commissioner Edward Caban, which extorted nightclubs, restaurants, and bars for money in exchange for "fixing" their problems with the NYPD. It is unclear whether and how Commissioner Caban was involved, but federal agents seized his phone, leading him to resign.

When: Phone seized by FBI and resigned in September 2024

Result: No charges have been filed yet.

Read more: [Investigators Trace Former Police Commissioner's Ties to Nightclubs](#)



8. SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE MAYOR – RESIGNED AMID INVESTIGATIONS

What: Senior Advisor to the Mayor Timothy Pearson resigned in a City Hall staff shake-up in late September. Pearson, a longtime friend of the Mayor dating back to their days on the NYPD, faced four sexual harassment lawsuits and was the subject of two DOI investigations at the time of his resignation, one looking into the sexual harassment allegations and another focused on his role in a 2023 physical altercation in at a migrant facility. Federal officials seized his phone shortly after his resignation in an investigation potentially related to the bribery inquiry involving the Banks brothers and Wright.

When: Resigned in September 2024, phone seized in October 2024.

Result: DOI has yet to issue any reports; the lawsuits are ongoing.

Read more: [Tim Pearson, Adams Confidant, Resigns Amid Corruption Investigations](#)

9. DIRECTOR OF ASIAN AFFAIRS – RESIGNED AMID INVESTIGATIONS

What: Mayor Adams' Director of Asian Affairs and longtime adviser Winnie Greco resigned in the face of multiple investigations and reports of misconduct. Federal officials raided her home as part of an investigation into a straw donor scheme and campaign finance law violations. Separately, the Department of Investigations opened an inquiry into possible ethical violations in City Hall. Greco continued working for the Mayor even after these investigations came out but eventually resigned in late 2024.

When: Raided by FBI in February 2024, resigned in October 2024

Result: No charges have been filed yet, and the DOI has not issued a report.

Read more: [Winnie Greco, Longtime Aide to Mayor Adams, Resigns in Latest Exit from a City Hall Under Federal Probes](#)

10. NYPD CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT – RESIGNED AMID QUID PRO QUO SEXUAL HARASSMENT ALLEGATIONS

What: Jeffrey Maddrey, chief of department for the New York Police Department, was suspended and later resigned after a subordinate officer accused him of demanding sexual misconduct in exchange for financial benefits and overtime pay for over a year. He is now the subject of investigations by federal prosecutors, the Manhattan District Attorney, and the City's Department of Investigations related to sexual misconduct and the provision of overtime, which skyrocketed during his term.

When: Resigned in December 2024; home raided by FBI in January 2025.


Result: Investigation still ongoing.

Read more: [Federal Agents Search the Home of Former Top NYPD. Official](#)

De Blasio Administration (2014-2021)

1. NYPD DEPUTY CHIEF - CONVICTED FOR MISUSING RESOURCES TO FAVOR DONORS

What: According to a guilty plea in a federal case against then-Deputy Chief for the NYPD, Michael Harrington, the top officer misused police resources, like providing



coverage and escort, for the benefit of an influential mayoral donor. The initial indictment from the U.S. Attorney charged Harrington with kickbacks and corruption, including accepting expensive gifts from politically connected businessmen in exchange for getting influence within the Police Department and receiving cops “on call” at their service.

When: Indicted in 2016, convicted and sentenced in 2018.

Result: Sentenced to two years of probation and 180 hours of community service.

Read more: [Accused of Corruption, Former NYPD. Chief Pleads Guilty to Lesser Charge](#)

- **ALSO: MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO – SKIRTED CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND ETHICS LAWS**

What: Though neither Mayor de Blasio nor his senior aides were ever charged with criminal activity, he faced several investigations by federal, state, and city agencies into campaign finance violations, pay-to-play schemes, and misuse of City funds. De Blasio was found to have acted on behalf of donors who sought favors, attempted to circumvent donation limits in supporting State Senate candidates, ignored ethics guidelines on improperly soliciting donations, and misused public funds in his presidential bid.

When: 2013-2021

Result: None of the investigations culminated in an indictment, but the U.S. Attorney and the Manhattan DA stated de Blasio acted contrary to “the intent and spirit” of the laws. The Conflicts of Interest Board ordered the former Mayor to pay \$475K for using taxpayer dollars to cover the travel costs of NYPD officers during his presidential race, despite receiving clear ethics directions against it.

Read more: [De Blasio’s history of campaign finance scandals](#); [De Blasio hit with historic conflicts of over presidential run](#)

Bloomberg Administration (2002-2013)

1. THE CITY’S PAYROLL CHIEF – SUSPENDED AND RESIGNED AMID INVESTIGATIONS

What: The Executive Director of the Office of Payroll Administration, Joel Bondy, oversaw a project to create a no-paper payroll system for City government, known as CityTime. Bondy gave the company developing the system “glowing reviews” for its work, but in reality, the company overcharged and illegally inflated costs over seven years, ballooning the CityTime budget from \$63 million to \$700 million. It was one of the largest fraud and corruption cases in City Government in decades. Bondy was criticized for not taking the necessary steps to oversee the project, and resigned shortly after indictments were made public.

When: Resigned in December 2010.

Result: Bondy resigned but was never charged. Three outside contractors working on the project were sentenced to 20 years in prison. A City computer specialist who received bribes was sentenced to three year’s probation. The vendor paid the City \$550 million to avoid prosecution.



Read more: [New York City Payroll Chief Resigns](#); [Three Contractors Sentenced to 20 Years in CityTime Corruption Case](#)

Giuliani Administration (1994-2001)

1. POLICE AND CORRECTION COMMISSIONER – CONVICTED FOR ACCEPTING GIFTS

What: Bernard Kerik, a Police Commissioner during Giuliani’s final two years in office, pleaded guilty in 2006 for accepting \$165,000 in renovations from a New Jersey contractor with ties to organized crime, assisting the contractor before City officials, and not reporting a loan during his service as Commissioner of Department Correction. In a later, unrelated federal case, Kerik was sentenced to 48 months in prison for tax fraud and making false statements.

When: Indicted – 2005, Convicted – 2006

Result: Kerik pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor charges and was forced to pay \$221,000 in fines and penalties.

Read more: [Former Police Commissioner Pleads Guilty to Taking Gift](#)

2. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION PRESIDENT – CONVICTED FOR EMBEZZLEMENT

What: Russell Harding, President of the NYC Housing Development Corporation between 1998-2002, embezzled more than \$400,000 of taxpayer dollars to fund a lavish lifestyle that included international travel, expensive restaurants, and luxury hotels. He pled guilty to federal conspiracy and fraud charges, as well as possessing child pornography. Four years after he was released from prison, Harding committed suicide.

When: Indicted – 2003, Sentenced – 2005

Result: Harding sentenced to more than five years in prison.

Read more: [Ex-Housing Chief Gets 63-Month Sentence](#)

Dinkins Administration (1990-1993)

1. BUDGET DIRECTOR – RESIGNED AMID INVESTIGATION

What: Philip Michael, who served as the head of the Office of Management and Budget from 1990-1993, resigned after a Department of Investigation report found that he and his team showed favoritism towards the firm Lockheed Information Management Services, which was seeking a \$150 million contract and an end to the City ban on contracts with the company, a result of its involvement in the 1986 Parking Violations Bureau bribery scandal. Lockheed was selected for the contract after lavishing Michael with meals and entertaining future employment options.

When: 1990-1991

Result: Resigned –1993. Contract negotiations with Lockheed were suspended.

Read more: [Budget Director of New York City is Forced to Quit](#)