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Mar 31, 2022

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# POLITICO

## New York Playbook

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BY ERIN DURKIN, ANNA GRONWOLD AND DEANNA GARCIA

Presented by The Black Car Fund

**The state budget** is probably going to be late.

**The final spending document** is due at midnight and, so far, most of the legislation hasn't even been introduced. New era, same Albany.

**There are at least** a couple barriers to blame. One is that there's no deal yet on potential changes to bail reform laws, an issue contentious enough to block all others from getting finalized.

**Legislative leaders** have moved toward an agreement with Gov. Kathy Hochul that would allow bail in some additional circumstances, including for certain gun crimes and repeat offenders who are given multiple appearance tickets. It would not allow for the hotly debated judicial discretion of "dangerousness." The Assembly was expected to discuss it in their conference last night. Assemblymember Latrice

Walker [hit Day 9 of her hunger strike](#) yesterday. They will have thoughts.

**Another problem** is that Covid-19 is again making its way through the Capitol. Several senior staff in the Hochul administration have tested positive and are working remotely. While your Playbook writers have not personally experienced this new variant, sources say it will knock you out, even if you're vaccinated and boosted.

**Let's be real:** It's unlikely second floor staff are the only ones. Lobbyists, lawmakers, officials and activists are once again tucked together tightly in the haunted castle's corners. Hochul has not yet tested positive, according to spokesperson Hazel Crampton-Hays.

**"All Executive Chamber personnel** follow clear health and safety guidance and isolate in the event of a positive test," she said.

"Governor Hochul gets tested regularly, tested negative today, and is working around the clock to finalize a budget that delivers for New Yorkers."

**It's not to say** that once everything gets rolling it won't go quickly. Deals are close for child care expansion, more casinos and a new kind of ethics oversight body. We have no reason to believe Hochul won't send messages of necessity to negate the normal three-day aging process required before passing legislation, [as her predecessors often did](#).

**A general consensus** right now is that everything could wrap sometime Monday. But that could be merely wishful thinking. If there's not a budget or a brief extension by then, the state can't make payroll for hundreds of thousands of employees.

**IT'S THURSDAY.** Got tips, suggestions or thoughts? Let us know ... By email: [EDurkin@politico.com](mailto:EDurkin@politico.com) and [agronewold@politico.com](mailto:agronewold@politico.com), or on Twitter: [@erinmdurkin](https://twitter.com/erinmdurkin) and [@annagronewold](https://twitter.com/annagronewold)

**WHERE'S KATHY?** In Albany with no public events scheduled.

**WHERE'S ERIC?** Speaking at the Partnership for New York City's annual meeting and attending the Carnegie Hall chairman's dinner.

**QUOTE OF THE DAY:** "Tell the governor there's more hell to come."  
— **Leslie Logan**, a founding member of the Seneca Mothers of the Nation, [to The Buffalo News](#).

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A message from The Black Car Fund:

The Black Car Fund kept NY moving during COVID by doing what it's done for 20 years: providing invaluable benefits to for-hire drivers and their families. Through the Black Car Fund, tens-of-thousands of professional drivers in NY are eligible for free telemedicine, vision, and dental coverage as well as insurance, prescription, urgent care, and diagnostic imaging discounts. Now the State can renew all of those benefits at no cost to taxpayers.

Learn more [here](#).

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## WHAT CITY HALL'S READING

**[“Adams' homeless sweeps have hit hundreds of encampments — only 5 people have accepted shelter,”](#)** by WNYC/Gothamist's **Elizabeth Kim and Gwynne Hogan:** “An effort to clear hundreds of homeless encampments across New York City has resulted in only five individuals accepting beds at a city shelter, Mayor Eric Adams said Wednesday. The city has so far removed 239 out of 244 encampment sites located mostly in Manhattan, according to city officials. Adams

said that while the number of those who had accepted shelter was low, he was hopeful they would rise over time as city workers establish trust with homeless individuals. The latest encampment removal began on March 18th.”

“ [Eric Adams Spurned on Key Asks in State Budget Talks](#),” by **The City’s Josefa Velasquez**: “In his first state budget go-round with state lawmakers, Mayor Eric Adams will likely be coming home empty-handed on two top priorities that had been in Gov. Kathy Hochul’s proposal for the state’s \$200 billion-plus spending plan. Adams seeks to extend mayoral control of New York City schools and renew a program that gives developers tax breaks in exchange for setting aside affordable housing, known as 421-a. Both have been dropped from the state budget, according to sources familiar with the ongoing discussions approaching an April 1 deadline.”

— [Adams supports two casinos in New York City amid state budget talks](#), by **POLITICO’s Joseph Spector**: Mayor Eric Adams wants to bet on two casinos for New York City as state lawmakers consider expediting licenses for three new downstate gambling halls. Adams spoke Wednesday about trying to land two of the three casinos licenses as legislators and Gov. Kathy Hochul appeared to be moving closer to a deal to end a 2023 moratorium on new casinos, allowing the bidding process to start this year. “We’re hoping that we have two locations in New York City. We don’t have the authorization to determine the siting. Albany is going to do that,” Adams told reporters.

“[NYC Council progressives blast Mayor Adams’ anti-gun plan as heavy-handed, discriminatory: ‘We cannot police our way out of this](#),” by **New York Daily News Chris Sommerfeldt**: “Mayor Adams’ top public safety officials came under rhetorical fire during a City Council hearing Wednesday over the administration’s anti-gun violence plan, with left-wing members blasting it as a blueprint for ‘over-policing’ Black and brown communities. The virtual oversight hearing, held by the Council’s Public Safety Committee, highlighted

the deep policy rifts that exist between the Adams administration and progressive Democrats in the city when it comes to policing. A key component of Adams' crimefighting plan is the reintroduction of a modified version of the NYPD's plainclothes units."

**["NYC Council Speaker Adrienne Adams pushes job training, declares equity is prerequisite to improving public safety,"](#)** by **New York Daily News' Michael Gartland:** "In a speech delivered to business and labor leaders Wednesday morning, Council Speaker Adrienne Adams laid out a legislative agenda focused on equity and getting more New Yorkers into jobs — a platform largely consistent with Mayor Eric Adams' goals, but different in emphasis. The Council Speaker spent much of her remarks at the Association for a Better New York breakfast talking about the need to expand job training, improve the 'school-to-profession pipeline' and ensure that more kids secure summer jobs."

**["New Exodus Post-Jail Contract Denied by Comptroller After Security Scrutiny,"](#)** by **The City's Greg B. Smith:** "The city's fiscal watchdog on Wednesday rejected Mayor Eric Adams' proposed new contract with Exodus Transitional Community to administer a program placing inmates released from Rikers Island in hotels — action rooted in THE CITY's finding that the nonprofit relied on an unlicensed security company. Earlier this month, THE CITY revealed that, under a previous pandemic-emergency contract, Exodus had relied on the unlicensed firm, Global Operations Security, to provide security at the hotels, including one where a female inmate reported an alleged sexual assault by an Exodus employee in 2020."

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refugee crisis, increased cyberattacks, rising energy costs and additional disruption to global supply chains. Go inside the top national security and foreign-policymaking shops for insight on the global threats faced by the U.S. and its allies and what actions world leaders are taking to address them. [Subscribe today](#).

## WHAT ALBANY'S READING

[“Seneca president says Hochul extracted 'ransom money' for new Bills stadium,”](#) by The Buffalo News’ Jerry Zremski: “A day after Gov. Kathy Hochul strong-armed \$564.8 million in casino revenues out of the Seneca Nation and targeted it to the new Buffalo Bills stadium, the tribe's president Wednesday reacted with an angry statement that attacked the governor's husband for his employer's potential ties to the new facility. But the Seneca president treated Hochul's stadium funding plan as all but inevitable, even though other Senecas proposed renewing a legal battle that the tribe has repeatedly lost in the past in an effort to get back that money. That split reflected a longstanding divide in Seneca Nation politics over how hard the Indian tribe should fight to retain the casino revenues it sent to Albany this week only after the state froze its bank accounts. But there was also agreement from both sides of that divide that Hochul did a terrible thing when she forced the tribe's hand.”

[“Senate Ethics chair 'frustrated' by plan to overhaul commission,”](#) by Times Union’s Chris Bragg: “The chair of the state Senate's Ethics Committee on Wednesday said that she’s ‘frustrated’ with a proposed ethics overhaul plan being negotiated by members of her own party — and may end up voting against it. Bronx state Sen. Alessandra Biaggi, a Democrat, was addressing a tentative agreement struck between the Senate Democratic conference and Gov. Kathy Hochul’s office, which would allow state leaders to appoint the members of a new 11-member ethics body. ‘This whole structure is

concerning to me,' Biaggi said in an interview. 'I don't like there being any politics in ethics. So the fact we're even engaging in this conversation is very frustrating. None of the commissioners should be appointed by the executive and legislative leaders.'”

**FIRST IN PLAYBOOK:** Gov. Kathy Hochul will extend at least part of an executive order that allows National Guard members to continue helping out at New York nursing homes, state health officials have confirmed. But they would not comment on whether other executive actions — including provisions which delay penalties associated with “safe staffing” and direct care spending at nursing homes — will also be extended [once the current order expires today](#). Department of Health spokesperson Jeffrey Hammond told POLITICO that “the provision of [Executive Order No. 4](#) related to the National Guard will be extended for 30 days.” DOH will reassess the extension next month, with a potential end date of May 31.

**Hochul has faced increasing pressure from union leaders** and Attorney General Tish James in recent days to stop delaying the implementation of the “safe staffing” and direct care spending requirements. But nursing home industry officials have pushed back, arguing that they will need thousands more staff to comply with the new rules and not be penalized. They had also raised concerns that failing to extend the executive order in any capacity would effectively end the emergency, and thus their ability to utilize the National Guard members to help fill those staffing shortages. As of Wednesday, 485 National Guard members were deployed to New York nursing homes, DOH confirmed. — *Shannon Young*

**“[New York Weighs a Gas Tax Holiday, a Popular ‘Bad Idea,’](#)” by The New York Times’ Grace Ashford:** “In the final feverish days of state budget negotiations, there are few things that New York State lawmakers seem to agree on. One of them is that gas prices are too high. Proposals to give New Yorkers some sort of relief have gained momentum in recent days, even as other issues show little movement.

The only question, it seems, is how to do it. The Democratic-led Senate put forth a proposal to suspend certain state gas taxes at the pump from May through December. A similar proposal in the Assembly would cut all taxes for a full year. Others have suggested issuing one-time rebate checks, which could be targeted at lower- and middle-income New Yorkers, or creating a tax credit.”

**[“Will New York Tackle its Largest Source of Emissions?”](#)** by **New York Focus’ Colin Kinniburgh**: “The climate council’s Energy Efficiency and Housing Advisory Panel estimated that New York needs to spend at least \$1 billion per year to help low- and moderate-income households decarbonize their homes. This reflects a core mandate of the state’s 2019 climate law: that the state must not only decarbonize, but do so equitably. The kind of funding needed to meet those targets is not on the table in state budget negotiations. But the governor, Assembly, and Senate have all proposed some funding for green retrofits, with the Senate’s one-house budget coming closest to the level the council advisory group says is needed. And budget negotiations could decide the fate of a slew of other measures designed to get fossil fuels out of buildings, including a gas ban for new construction.”

**#UpstateAmerica**: Ballston Spa will [host The World’s Largest Bounce House](#) in May.

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A message from The Black Car Fund:





## 0 FROM THE DELEGATION

**FIRST IN PLAYBOOK** — Rep. Ritchie Torres wrote to Gov. Kathy Hochul and New York City Mayor Eric Adams urging them to guard against Russian cyberattacks by mandating the use of multifactor authentication across all public agencies. Hochul and Adams [launched a cybersecurity task](#) force last month along with other mayors, but local systems may still be vulnerable to hacking: the city Law Department’s computers were [brought down](#) last year in part because they did not have multifactor authentication in place despite requirements. “Russia and the criminal organizations it harbors have demonstrated the capacity for malicious cyber activity,” Torres wrote. “Mandating the implementation of multifactor authentication is a strong line of defense that will assist the Joint Operations Centers’ ability to monitor, respond to, and defend our state and country from cyberattacks.”

## 0 AROUND NEW YORK

- **The city's tourism** agency [projected a 70 percent increase](#) in tourists this year compared to last year, to 56.4 million visitors.
  - **The city** [is expanding a pilot program that sends unarmed mental health workers](#) instead of cops in response to 911 calls about mental health episodes.
  - **Disability advocates** [pushed back against](#) a proposal to allow unfolded strollers on city buses.
  - **Mayor Eric Adams** [thinks Will Smith](#) just had a bad day and shouldn't lose his Oscar.
  - **There's a coyote** [wandering Fort Tryon Park](#).
  - **Taxi medallion** owners and a lender [reached a deal](#) to stop repossessions of medallions.
  - **New York businesses** want [state assistance with unemployment insurance](#).
  - **Westchester County lawmakers** are considering up to an additional \$10 million to [complete the overhaul of Memorial Field](#), which has sat vacant for more than a decade.
  - **Two Orthodox Jewish** candidates who self-describe as politically conservative [are squaring off](#) in a special election for Assembly in Nassau County next week.
  - **City Comptroller** Brad Lander [is not approving a contract](#) for a controversial new health care plan for retired city workers.
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 SOCIAL DATA BY DANIEL LIPPMAN

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:** MSNBC's **Ari Melber** ... POLITICO's **Ben White** ... NYT's **Astead Herndon** ... CNN's **Sara Murray** ... Newsweek's **Emily Knapp** ... Skadden's **David Zornow** ... **Ron Insana** ... **Alan Zibel** ... **Luke McGeeney**

**MEDIAWATCH — Zach Williams** [will be the new Albany reporter for the New York Post](#). He has been covering state politics for City & State. ... **Isaac Arnsdorf** is joining the Washington Post as a national political reporter. He most recently has been a reporter at ProPublica and is a POLITICO alum.

**MAKING MOVES — Danny Frost** is now senior vice president at Risa Heller Communications. Previously, he was a senior adviser and communications director for Manhattan D.A. Cy Vance ... **Devon Puglia** has been promoted to managing director at SKDK.

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A message from The Black Car Fund:

The Black Car Fund kept NY moving during COVID by doing what it's done for 20 years: providing invaluable benefits to for-hire drivers and their families. Through the Black Car Fund, tens-of-thousands of professional drivers in NY are eligible for free telemedicine, vision, and dental coverage as well as insurance, prescription, urgent care, and diagnostic imaging discounts. The Fund also provided 20,000 PPE kits with masks, hand sanitizer and gloves for drivers to keep

them on the road, serving New Yorkers. That's why NPR called The Black Car Fund "the future of benefits". Now the State legislature is considering an extension of the Black Car Fund's successful programs--at no cost to taxpayers. At this critical moment, it is imperative that our lawmakers recognize what a game-changer this help has been for New York's for-hire drivers.

Learn more [here](#).

## REAL ESTATE

**[“Mayor Adams signs bill extending survey deadline for NYC rent stabilization,” by ABC7:](#)** “Mayor Eric Adams signed a law Wednesday impacting rent-stabilized apartments in New York City. ‘I am pleased that my first bill signing and hearing is one that gets stuff done for New York City renters and working people,’ said Mayor Adams. ‘Too many New Yorkers are struggling to keep a roof over their heads and put food on the table, and this bill provides the time needed for the city to make an informed decision on the extension of rent stabilization.’ The new law allows rent stabilization to continue as deadline for the Housing and Vacancy Survey is moved from April 1 to July 1. ... According to state law, in order to keep it in effect, the vacancy rate of apartments has to be less than 5% in the city.”

**[“Will Ending a Lucrative Tax Break Ease or Fuel the N.Y.C. Housing Crisis?” by The New York Times’ Matthew Haag and Mihir Zaveri:](#)** “Jackson Park in Queens is a city unto itself: 1,871 luxury apartments in glittering glass towers with a heated rooftop pool, a full-size indoor basketball court and a 1.6-acre private park. Penthouse residences, whose floor-to-ceiling windows offer panoramic Manhattan views, rent for \$8,500 a month. It also has another distinction. The sprawling development by Tishman Speyer, one of the country’s biggest private real estate companies, is the top beneficiary of New York City’s most generous property tax exemption. An annual

reduction of \$21 million nearly eliminates the tax bill on the site, which is worth an estimated \$394 million and opened in 2018 on a former parking lot in Long Island City. The subsidy is made possible through a 51-year-old tax-incentive program known as 421a, an esoteric name for a lucrative property-tax exemption that critics say has worsened the city's housing affordability crisis by encouraging the construction of luxury buildings instead of lower-cost homes.”

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