

BROOKLYN
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ERIC GONZALEZ

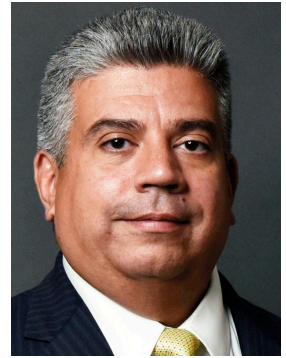
ANNUAL REPORT

2018



Dear Friend,

In January 2018, I had the unique and humbling honor of standing with my family and the Chief Judge of New York State, in front of my friends, neighbors, and colleagues, to take the oath of office as the elected District Attorney of Kings County. Growing up in Brooklyn, I could never have imagined such a moment. I came home after law school, driven by a commitment to serve and a desire to make a difference in this great borough, which was a very different place when I joined our Office in 1995.



District Attorney
Eric Gonzalez

While we have made great strides, our work—keeping Brooklyn safe and strengthening community trust by ensuring fairness and equal justice for all—is never done.

To guide our work, and to build on our Office's proud tradition of criminal justice innovation, I launched **Justice 2020**, an unprecedented gathering of experts, practitioners, community leaders, law enforcement, clergy, and other partners from all aspects of the system. I asked them to help me create a national model of what a truly progressive prosecutor's office can be. They delivered a series of concrete recommendations, which we started implementing immediately. Together, they form the Justice 2020 action plan we released this March. The plan rests on four pillars:

- 1) Reduce incarceration – make jail the “alternative”
- 2) Engage communities as partners in justice
- 3) Focus resources on the drivers of crime
- 4) Invest in the DA's staff and data infrastructure

We have already made tremendous progress towards advancing these ambitious goals. Less than two years after I changed our misdemeanor bail policy, we've reduced our misdemeanor jail admissions by more than half. Prosecutions for marijuana possession have fallen by 98%. Our Conviction Review Unit continues to be a national model. And we're looking to the future, too, with nationally-recognized youth diversion and investment initiatives that get young people out of the criminal justice system—or keep them from ever becoming involved in the first place.

While we are making the system fairer, we are also keeping Brooklyn safe. In 2018, homicides fell to the lowest level on record. We've broken up gun trafficking rings, prosecuted complex financial frauds, and secured justice in cases involving shocking acts of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and murder.

In 2019, we will continue forging community partnerships to prevent violence and deliver the resources our communities need to thrive. We will measure our progress and keep the community we serve informed. And we will listen to you—please share your thoughts at **feedback@brooklynda.org**. Together, we'll keep making Brooklyn safer and fairer.

With pride in our success and great hope for our future,

Eric Gonzalez

TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

JUSTICE 2020: AN ACTION PLAN FOR BROOKLYN	1
ABOUT THE BROOKLYN DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE	
TRIAL DIVISION	5
INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION	6
OTHER BUREAUS & UNITS	6
DIVERSITY IN THE OFFICE	7
TRAINING	7
SAFETY	
BY THE NUMBERS: BROOKLYN IS SAFER THAN EVER	9
DISMANTLING VIOLENT CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES	10
SECURING JUSTICE IN MURDER CASES	10
FIGHTING GUN VIOLENCE	11
SOLVING COLD CASES	14
WORKING TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	15
COMBATTING SEXUAL ASSAULT AND CHILD ABUSE	16
STEPPING UP AGAINST HATE CRIMES	18
RESPONDING TO CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT	20
MAKING STREETS SAFER	21
ATTACKING COMPLEX FRAUDS	22
FAIRNESS	
BEGIN AGAIN	27
MARIJUANA REFORM	29
BAIL REFORM	31
FAIRNESS FOR IMMIGRANTS	32
CONVICTION REVIEW UNIT	33
COMMUNITY-BASED RESPONSES TO CRIME	35
MENTAL HEALTH COURT	38
JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM: RAISE THE AGE	39
RED HOOK COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER	41
NEW RESPONSES TO SERIOUS CRIMES	44
SUPPORTING THE RE-ENTRY PROCESS	46
TRUST	
NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS	49
COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT & RESOURCE CENTER	50
COMMUNITY CONNECT	51
LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY BUREAU	52
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	53
VICTIM SERVICES UNIT	55
YOUTH INITIATIVES	57
TRANSPARENCY	
IMPROVING DATA COLLECTION	61
WORKING TO END RACIAL DISPARITIES	61
ELECTRONIC DISCOVERY	62
CONCLUSION	63

JUSTICE 2020: AN ACTION PLAN FOR BROOKLYN

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*



DA Gonzalez announced the Justice 2020 Action Plan, together with Launch Committee Co-Chairs Dr. Rudy Crew, President of Medgar Evers College, and the Hon. Jonathan Lippman, former Chief Judge of New York State.

When District Attorney Eric Gonzalez took office, he knew he wanted to create a national model for what a truly progressive, 21st century prosecutor's office could look like. That vision led to the creation of his Justice 2020 initiative, which brought together 70 stakeholders from across Brooklyn—including community leaders, criminal justice reformers, formerly incarcerated people, members of law enforcement, public defenders, clergy, and academics—in an unprecedented collaboration to assess the Office in the present and plan for its future.

The product of that effort is the Justice 2020 action plan—a guide for both continued excellence and groundbreaking innovation in the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office in the years to come. You can read DA Gonzalez's plan at **BrooklynDA.org/Justice2020**.

The core values at the heart of Justice 2020 are those that have guided the District Attorney throughout his nearly 25-year career: safety, fairness, trust, and transparency.

Each of those values is embodied in one of the **four pillars** of DA Gonzalez's Justice 2020 initiative:

SAFETY

1) With safety as our top priority, we will focus on those few individuals who drive violence in our community. In the last 20 years, Brooklyn has made enormous progress in driving down violent crime and bringing up the quality of life across the borough. But we know that in some neighborhoods, people still feel unsafe as they go to work, go to school, and go about their lives. So long as anybody feels unsafe anywhere in our borough, there is work for all of us to do everywhere.

We can and will continue to do more to drive crime down even further. The sad reality is that a relatively small number of individuals commit a disproportionately large share of violent crimes. In partnership with the

NYPD and community members, we will use the most sophisticated data analysis methods available to identify those individuals most likely to commit violent crime, intervene to prevent violence when possible, and respond swiftly but fairly if they persist in violent acts that threaten all of us. This approach has already helped bring homicides in Brooklyn down to an all-time low.

FAIRNESS

2) We will make our system fairer by incarcerating fewer people and making jail the “alternative.” While we must hold people accountable for committing crimes, accountability is not always the same thing as punishment. True accountability requires acknowledging wrongdoing and the harm it has caused, making amends to the extent possible, and finding the most effective ways to make sure it doesn't happen again. In some cases, incarcerating someone may be the only just outcome—and the only way to ensure they don't do further harm—but in most cases there is a better way.

Prosecutors who rely on incarceration as the automatic response to crime frequently (if unintentionally) undermine public safety by breaking apart families, dividing communities, and preventing people from pursuing the very educational and employment opportunities that reduce recidivism and strengthen communities.

In the Brooklyn DA's Office we will reduce incarceration—and the disproportionate impact that mass incarceration has on communities of color—by asking ourselves, at every juncture of every case, how we can hold the accused person accountable and prevent further harm to the community without putting that person in jail. Fairness and equal justice require a thorough and rigorous analysis of all parts of every case - we will never hesitate to follow that process, no matter what type of outcome it dictates

TRUST

3) We will engage communities as partners in justice and put our trust in one another into action. The District Attorney is elected to serve the community. We believe that community members know best what public safety and fair and equal justice truly mean. Part of our job is to give community members meaningful opportunities to shape how we as prosecutors promote safety and fairness. We must also must give community members the tools they need to address their concerns themselves, directly in their own neighborhoods, and—where it's safe and fair to do so—without the involvement of law enforcement.

Prosecutors in the Brooklyn DA's Office are not case processors. Rather, our staff will listen to all voices, consider all facts, and evaluate all circumstances in each and every case. We will continue to partner with community organizations to expand rehabilitation programs, pre-trial release, and services outside of jail.

TRANSPARENCY

4) We will invest in our staff and data infrastructure. What we measure is what we value. To ensure that DA Gonzalez's vision is becoming a reality, we will invest in our ability to gather and analyze data on case outcomes. We will use that data to reduce incarceration, improve public safety, and reduce racial disparities in everything we do, and we will share what we learn with the public wherever possible. We will also refine the structure our Office to improve efficiency and train our staff in cultural competency and implicit bias to better serve Brooklyn's diverse communities.

This Annual Report details the substantial progress we made in 2018 towards advancing our core values of **safety, fairness, trust, and transparency**. Please read on to learn more and share your feedback at **feedback@brooklynda.org**.

ABOUT THE BROOKLYN DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*



District Attorney Gonzalez welcomes the 2018 Class of ADAs

The Brooklyn District Attorney's Office is made up of more than 500 attorneys and more than 600 other professionals, including paralegals, forensic and financial analysts, investigators, social workers, and administrators—all dedicated to promoting safety and fairness for the people of Brooklyn. The DA's Office investigates and prosecutes crime, assists victims, and implements crime prevention strategies to improve public safety and the quality of life in Brooklyn. Much of the Office's work is handled by its Trial and Investigations Divisions. Additional specialized legal bureaus and units ensure prompt, effective, and fair prosecutions. The Office also operates a number of innovative programs focusing on engaging and improving the community.

TRIAL DIVISION

The Trial Division handles the majority of cases—misdemeanors and felonies—that are investigated and prosecuted by the Office. Many cases are the result of an arrest by the New York City Police Department or one of our other law enforcement partners, while others begin within the Office itself.

Brooklyn's 23 police precincts are divided into five Trial Zones under a successful community prosecution model. The model allows prosecutors to partner with police commanders and officers—together with community leaders and liaisons—in the same four or five precincts on an ongoing basis. They develop not only close working relationships that improve efficiency and case outcomes, but also specific understandings of neighborhood needs and concerns. The Trial Division caseload includes a full range of offenses, from assault and narcotics to burglary, robbery, and attempted murder.

Trial Division prosecutors are involved in all aspects of cases, from their inception to their ultimate disposition. Case resolutions may include trials, negotiated pleas, or community-based accountability programs. Each disposition is guided by DA Gonzalez's long-running approach to criminal justice—what makes us safer, what's fair—and requires prosecutors to assess all of the evidence, facts, and circumstances in crafting an individualized conclusion to each case.

The Trial Division includes the following Bureaus and Units:

Criminal Court Unit • Early Case Assessment Bureau • Firearms Prosecution Unit • Homicide Bureau • Law Enforcement Assistance Unit • Red Hook Community Justice Center • School Advocacy Bureau • Trial Zones • Vehicular Crimes Unit • Young Adult Court

INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office

The Investigations Division handles complex crimes—often financial—that require painstaking, long-term investigations. The Division has the expertise and resources necessary to build cases targeting frauds, public corruption, tax and revenue crimes, and wage theft. The Division's work is of special importance to workers, real estate owners, and immigrant communities. Some of the Office's highest-profile cases are prosecuted by the Division, which has a critical role in making Brooklyn safer and fairer. The Investigations Division includes:

Asset Forfeiture and Crimes Against Revenue Bureau • Frauds Bureau • Cybercrimes Unit • Health Care Fraud Unit • Immigrant Affairs Unit • Labor Fraud Unit • Organized Crime and Racketeering Unit • Public Integrity Bureau • Real Estate Fraud Unit

OTHER BUREAUS & UNITS

The Office has established specialized bureaus and units to handle matters that require particular expertise, training, and sensitivity, including hate crimes, domestic violence, sex crimes, misconduct by law enforcement officers, and cold cases. They also oversee programs for individuals returning to the community from incarceration, as well as drug treatment and mental health programs. Other Office bureaus and units include:

Appeals Bureau • Alternative Programs Bureau • Campus Sexual Assault Response Initiative • Conviction Review Unit • Domestic Violence Bureau • Elder Abuse Unit • Forensic Science and Cold Case Unit • Hate Crimes Bureau • Human Trafficking Unit • Law Enforcement Accountability Bureau • Mental Health Court Unit • Re-Entry Bureau • Special Victims Bureau • Violent Criminal Enterprises Bureau and Crime Strategies Unit

DIVERSITY IN THE OFFICE

As the first Latino District Attorney in New York State history, serving one of the most diverse counties in the country, DA Gonzalez strongly believes in promoting diversity and inclusion at every level of the Brooklyn DA's Office, from new Assistant DAs to executive leadership. The make-up of the Office should reflect the borough we serve.

To that end, DA Gonzalez appointed the first-ever Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer in the history of the Office. He also adopted a strategic plan for promoting diversity and inclusion. Recognizing that implicit bias can thwart diversity during the recruitment and hiring process, the plan includes concrete steps to root out bias at every stage, also including later promotional opportunities.

Equally vital is retaining the talented and diverse staff we hire. The Office commits significant time and resources to supporting career development, and is launching a revamped mentoring program to support new staff and ensure the retention of veteran prosecutors.

TRAINING

In light of DA Gonzalez's commitment to promoting fairness and equal justice, all new Assistant District Attorneys (ADAs) are trained in cultural competency, implicit bias, the impact of racial disparities in the criminal justice system, pitfalls that can lead to wrongful convictions, prosecutorial ethics, unique issues pertaining to young and immigrant defendants, and how to assess when non-jail or non-prosecution resolutions are appropriate. These important issues are addressed together with prosecution fundamentals, including how to prepare for and conduct trials, as well as how to most effectively engage the communities we serve.

SAFETY

Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office



DA Gonzalez and community advocates from across the borough to announcing historically low homicide rate and call for increased investment in community-based efforts to prevent violence.

The Brooklyn DA's Office is promoting public safety by focusing resources on the small number of individuals who are most likely to commit serious violent crimes. The Office seeks to intervene to prevent violence when possible, and remove from the community those individuals who commit most acts of violence—the drivers of crime. The DA's Office is also focusing resources on prosecuting gender-based violence, hate crimes, and offenses that victimize the most vulnerable in our community—including children, the elderly, immigrants, and workers.

BY THE NUMBERS: BROOKLYN IS SAFER THAN EVER

Statistics from reported crime show that Brooklyn has never been safer. In 2018, for the first time since the NYPD began keeping records decades ago, Brooklyn recorded fewer than 100 homicides—last year’s count of 98 represents an 11.17% decrease from 2017. Other serious and violent crimes also declined in 2018. From the prior year, there were 353 fewer robberies, 149 fewer burglaries, and 214 fewer auto thefts reported.

The true measure of our progress in Brooklyn, though, looks further back. The difference between 1993—shortly before DA Gonzalez began his career as a prosecutor in the Office—and today is nothing short of astounding, with remarkable declines across every category of major crime: murder (down 86%), robbery (down 87%), rape (down 52%), burglary (down 85%), felony assault (down 59%), and auto theft (down 95%). Nearly 100,000 fewer serious crimes were reported in 2018 than in 1993—for violent felonies, there were at least 35,000 fewer victims, a reduction in excess of three-quarters.

These record lows allow us to focus our efforts where they will do the most good. Research shows that a very small number of individuals — so-called drivers of crime—are responsible for a very large share of violent crime in our communities. Embracing today’s technology, we take a data-driven approach to build stronger cases based on traditional evidence, like video and audio surveillance, along with social media assessments and other cutting-edge technologies and tools that track gang activity.

The Office also supports and collaborates with community organizations, advocates, and clergy who intervene to break cycles of violence and counsel young people on how to avoid or withdraw from gang activity. Community-based solutions like these are essential to reducing violence. The Office will focus on expanding and strengthening these partnerships in 2019.

DISMANTLING VIOLENT CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

The Violent Criminal Enterprises (VCE) Bureau was formed to address the evolving nature of groups and organizations responsible for much of the violent crime remaining in our communities. Gangs and street crews are frequently involved not just in violence, but also in gun and narcotics trafficking, often supported by financial crime, like some credit card schemes. While in the past different units focused on different kinds of crimes, the Bureau attacks the criminal entities themselves using comprehensive investigative strategies, including analysis of social media, electronic communications, and other data, to build successful conspiracy and enterprise corruption cases against offenders and dismantle their violent organizations. The Bureau works closely with our Crime Strategies Unit to integrate its data and sophisticated analysis into this important work.

CRIME STRATEGIES UNIT

The District Attorney's Crime Strategies Unit works closely with VCE to use sophisticated data analysis to identify drivers of crime—those few individuals responsible for many of the violent crimes committed in the community—and ensure that cases involving these individuals receive special attention to secure appropriate resolutions and promote public safety. An automated alert system provides prosecutors with detailed intelligence information in cases involving these defendants. Unit staff members also attend NYPD CompStat meetings to share information and assist in devising informed and effective responses to gun crime.

SECURING JUSTICE IN MURDER CASES

Some of Brooklyn's most experienced and successful prosecutors work in our Homicide Bureau, ensuring justice for victims and survivors

1,025
number of
gun cases
prosecuted
in 2018

of this most egregious of crimes. Members of the Bureau respond at all times, day and night, to investigate violent deaths in collaboration with the NYPD, enhancing cases by visiting crime scenes, drafting search warrants, interviewing witnesses, and taking statements from suspects, and ensuring that murder cases are properly handled in their early stages. The Bureau is ultimately responsible for authorizing all homicide arrests.

This work continues after an arrest is made. Homicide prosecutors support other Bureaus (which try certain cases, such as domestic violence and child abuse deaths) while themselves trying many of the borough's highest-profile cases. These cases involve painstaking investigations, meticulous trial work, and deeply sensitive and compassionate support and advocacy for victims' families and friends, often over many months and even years.

FIGHTING GUN VIOLENCE

DA Gonzalez has made reducing gun violence in Brooklyn a top priority. From long-term gun trafficking investigations, to prevention programs focused on high-risk youth—including cutting-edge work with credible messengers and violence interrupters—to individual gun possession cases, the key to success lies in increased communication with law enforcement partners and support from community members.

GUN TRAFFICKING

Illegal firearms on Brooklyn streets expose each of us to the danger of gun violence. New York State and New York City have some of the strongest gun safety laws in the country. Unfortunately, gun traffickers exploit weak gun laws in other states, buying guns in bulk and bringing them to New York to resell on our streets at a huge profit. Firearms used in crimes and recovered from offenders were almost always obtained illegally in a different jurisdiction.

Under DA Gonzalez, VCE and the NYPD conducted the largest takedown of a gun trafficking ring in Brooklyn's history. In 2017, the Office secured an unprecedented 627-count indictment against 24 individuals—22 of whom were residents of Virginia—charging them with weapons offenses and conspiracy for trafficking in guns purchased in Virginia for sale on the streets of Brooklyn. In total, 217 firearms were recovered, including several assault weapons. The traffickers sold those assault weapons for up to \$2,200 and handguns for up to \$1,200, using the proceeds to fund a lavish lifestyle, as well as the purchase of more guns. All 24 defendants have since pled guilty. The ring leaders were sentenced to up to 15 years in prison.

FIREARMS PROSECUTION UNIT

Cases involving weapons possession by individuals in the community are coordinated by the Office's Firearms Prosecution Unit, which operates in two courts designated as Gun Parts. These parts build on a successful model of specialized courts (such as domestic violence and drug courts) to bring specific expertise and experience to bear on these important cases, with a focus on reducing the length of time from arrest to disposition. Designated judges sit in the parts while a veteran prosecutor monitors cases and oversees dispositions, promoting consistency and fairness in resolutions that—where it's fair and safe to do so—can sometimes include non-jail diversion programs.

TRIGGERLOCK

Through the Triggerlock program, our partners in federal law enforcement can bring additional resources to bear on cases involving predicate felons arrested with firearms. Working with the United States Attorney, the Office has seen nearly 150 gun cases prosecuted in federal court since 2015.



SOLVING COLD CASES

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

Scientific and technological advances have given us the tools to solve crimes and do justice in cases that had previously been beyond our ability to solve, often years or decades after they were committed. Recognizing the possibilities of this new technology, and the attention such cases require, DA Gonzalez expanded the Office's Forensic Science Unit in 2017 with a newly-created Cold Case Unit.

The Unit reviews cold cases with a focus on reevaluating physical evidence, locating missing crime scene evidence and generating new leads, and interviewing new witnesses. The Unit is staffed by a criminalist who joined the Office with extensive work experience examining forensic evidence for New York City's Office of Chief Medical Examiner. This DNA expert assists in assessing previous testing in cold cases to determine whether additional testing is possible or desirable. The Unit's work also includes reviewing all forensic reports obtained by the Office, preparing expert witnesses for testimony, and assisting prosecutors in cross examining proposed defense expert witnesses. The Brooklyn DA's Office is the only prosecutorial agency in New York State that has a criminalist on staff to help navigate the increasingly complex and ever-developing landscape of DNA and other forensic evidence.

Although cold cases often take a long time to come to fruition, the expanded Forensic Science and Cold Case Unit has had great success in 2018, including multiple DNA hits in unsolved homicide cases, five murder indictments, and a top-count murder conviction in its first trial.

The Unit also assisted in more than 200 grand jury presentations and provided support in more than 100 trial-ready cases, including complicated sexual assault and homicide cases.

5

number of
cold case
indictments
in 2018

WORKING TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Each year, the Domestic Violence Bureau investigates and prosecutes approximately 10,000 cases of intimate partner and gender-based violence, with criminal charges ranging from misdemeanor assaults to homicides. The Bureau has been at the forefront of prosecuting crimes such as stalking and strangulation, which frequently arise in a domestic violence context and present unique challenges for prosecutors.

The Bureau works closely with the **Brooklyn Family Justice Center**, a “one-stop” walk-in center providing a range of services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, and sex trafficking. Physically, the FJC is located in the DA’s Office next to our DV Bureau, allowing victims to access resources immediately and without travelling from one government office to another. Among the many resources available are counseling, civil legal assistance for immigration and family court matters, housing and HRA assistance, economic empowerment programs, and children’s programming. The Brooklyn Family Justice center is located at **350 Jay Street, 15th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201**, and is available from **9 A.M. to 5 P.M..**

ELDER ABUSE UNIT

The Elder Abuse Unit prides itself on protecting some of Brooklyn’s most vulnerable residents, many of whom may not realize that help is available for them. The Elder Abuse Unit handles all cases of partner and parental abuse involving victims age 60 and older. This includes cases of physical abuse, such as assaults, as well as those involving threats of violence. The Unit also prosecutes cases of physical abuse and neglect by caregivers (whether paid or unpaid) and works closely with city agencies and organizations to ensure that Brooklyn’s senior residents get the services and protections they need. The Unit also coordinates with the Frauds Bureau to prosecute financial schemes targeting elderly victims.

COMBATting SEXUAL ASSAULT AND CHILD ABUSE

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

The Special Victims Bureau investigates and prosecutes sexual assault cases, regardless of the age of the victim, and cases of physical abuse and neglect involving young children, including child homicides. Victims of these horrific crimes are especially vulnerable and have unique needs. Prosecutors in the Bureau are trained to meet those needs and ensure that justice is done in these difficult cases.

Providing survivors with the support and care they need to recover and feel safe is at the core of the Bureau's work. Survivors' input and partnership is a key element of successful prosecutions in these difficult cases, and that input is sought constantly and incorporated in every case. The Bureau has access to a range of enhanced investigative techniques, which can be particularly important in cases of acquaintance rape, allowing the Bureau to successfully prosecute even when—as is often the case—there are no other witnesses.

In collaboration with the Brooklyn Child Advocacy Center (a multi-disciplinary partnership that includes representatives from the Administration for Children's Services, the NYPD's Brooklyn Child Abuse Squad, the not-for-profit service agency Safe Horizon, and medical professionals), the Bureau investigates more than 5,000 reports of child abuse and neglect annually, ensuring timely responses to promote safe and healthy outcomes, as well as criminal prosecutions where appropriate.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING UNIT

35
number of agencies
we partner with to
prosecute human
trafficking

The Special Victims Bureau's Human Trafficking Unit works tirelessly to investigate and prosecute those who cause grievous psychological and physical harm by profiting through sex, child, and labor trafficking. Traffickers coerce their victims through a variety of vicious acts, including beatings, extortion, starvation, confinement, and compelled drug use, all to horrific results. Many of the Unit's cases involve young girls and women forced into prostitution.

The Human Trafficking Unit also provides the co-chair of the groundbreaking Brooklyn Human Trafficking Task Force—a collaboration of more than 35 federal and local law enforcement agencies and social services providers that enables the Unit to more effectively prosecute traffickers and assist trafficking survivors. The Task Force is supported by a Bureau of Justice Assistance grant from the United States Department of Justice.

The Unit's staff also engages in broad community outreach. The Unit uses meetings at schools and community centers to educate Brooklyn residents about trafficking, including how to identify warning signs that a person might be a trafficking victim, and how to respond.

In association with the Task Force, the Unit presents an annual lecture for practitioners and community members, providing analysis of a particular topic within this important area, and promoting public attention to these critical issues.

STEPPING UP AGAINST HATE CRIMES

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

Hate crimes—criminal expressions of bigotry that threaten entire communities and tear at the fabric of our society—require a swift and decisive response by prosecutors equipped with the specialized tools and experience needed to deliver justice to victims of these terrible acts. Recognizing the threat that these crimes pose to every member of the Brooklyn community, and their increasing frequency in recent months, District Attorney Gonzalez expanded a prior hate crimes unit and created a dedicated Hate Crimes Bureau to address these insidious crimes.

35
cases prosecuted
by the
Hate Crimes
Bureau in 2018

Staffed with a diverse group of senior prosecutors, the Bureau enters cases at the crucial early investigative stages, following cases through to their completion. The Bureau also reaches out to vulnerable communities to educate people about their rights and how to protect themselves from bias-motivated attacks. The Bureau prosecuted 35 hate crime cases in 2018 alone.

The Bureau's caseload consists of crimes that are motivated, in whole or in substantial part, by a belief or perception regarding the race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability, or sexual orientation of the victim, regardless of whether the belief or perception is correct. The Brooklyn DA's Office operates a Hate Crimes Helpline at **718-250-4949**.

Creating a single point of contact for hate crimes cases that will guide police and community responses is part of DA Gonzalez's Justice 2020 action plan, which also calls for including a multilingual and diverse staff with ongoing culturally-specific training and connections to vulnerable populations. Creating this dedicated Hate Crimes Bureau serves as an important foundation for achieving these goals.



RESPONDING TO CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

Created in March 2017, the Brooklyn DA's Campus Sexual Assault Response Initiative works proactively with college students and administrators to raise awareness of sexual assaults on campus, protect and support student survivors, and foster cooperation among schools and law enforcement.

As part of the initiative, the DA's Office works with campus officials to improve and institutionalize a coordinated approach to campus sexual assaults, enhancing reporting and investigation while ensuring an appropriate, comprehensive response. Representatives of the DA's Office, in partnership with community organizations, speak directly to new students arriving on campus during orientation and back-to-school activities. The Office also offers training programs for campus staff.

The Initiative's task force works to connect every campus survivor to the comprehensive services of the Office's Victim Services Unit, even in cases that do not result in criminal prosecution. Early access to complete services enhances the investigative process while minimizing any additional trauma from involvement with the criminal justice system and ensuring that victims are fully and accurately informed as early as possible.

In November 2017, the Campus Sexual Assault Response Initiative hosted the second annual Symposium on Campus Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence, bringing together experts on the causes and effects of sexual violence, survivor advocates, college administrators, and law enforcement officials to discuss how we can better keep students safe on college campuses.

MAKING STREETS SAFER

District Attorney Gonzalez recognizes that the Office has a key role to play in efforts to reduce traffic injuries and fatalities. The Office is committed to vigorously prosecuting drunk, drugged, and reckless driving, as well as hit-and-run cases and violations of the City's expanded Right of Way law, which provides criminal penalties for drivers who cause injury or death by failing to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks. The Brooklyn District Attorney's Vehicular Crimes Unit was the first comprehensive unit in New York City to provide guidance, expertise, and consistency in the prosecution of vehicular crimes.

The Unit provides assistance to the New York City Police Department in a wide variety of vehicular crimes. In collisions involving death or serious physical injury, a member of the Unit is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to answer legal questions, obtain search warrants, and guide Office response to crime scenes and precincts to take statements, interview witnesses, and prepare cases for Grand Jury presentations. It also provides expertise in the specialized scientific, forensic, and strategic aspects of these important cases. Finally, the Unit has developed Choices and Consequences, an educational program for young people focused on the consequences of drunk, drugged, and reckless driving.

Last year, DA Gonzalez successfully joined street safety advocates and other district attorneys to call for the restoration of speed cameras in school zones. Though studies show that these cameras reduce speeding near schools by 63%, the legislature had let the law allowing these cameras expire, removing this important safety tool. The advocacy of the District Attorney and many others, including parents, street safety activists, and other prosecutors, led the mayor and the governor to restore the cameras to operation before the new school year began.

63

percentage by
which speed
cameras reduce
speeding near
schools

ATTACKING COMPLEX FRAUDS

Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office

The Frauds Bureau investigates and prosecutes a wide variety of complex financial crimes, from scams targeting immigrants and homeowners, to wage theft and other crimes against workers, to healthcare schemes that defraud public programs and divert resources from people who truly need help. Protecting Brooklyn residents from all manner of fraud and scams is an essential part of protecting public safety and building community trust.

REAL ESTATE FRAUD UNIT

The Real Estate Fraud Unit investigates and prosecutes fraud related to real property, including deed fraud, mortgage fraud, and foreclosure rescue schemes. For many working families and retirees, their home is their largest investment. Real estate fraud can therefore have devastating financial consequences. District Attorney Gonzalez has made it a priority to protect Brooklyn residents from these types of schemes and to hold real estate scammers accountable.

IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS UNIT

Brooklyn is home to one of the largest immigrant populations in the country. More than 30% of Brooklyn residents are foreign-born, and immigrants are essential to the cultural and economic life of Brooklyn neighborhoods. Unfortunately, there are individuals who deliberately prey upon these vulnerable communities. The Immigrant Affairs Unit investigates and prosecutes individuals and businesses that target and exploit immigrants through fraud.

The Unit encourages non-citizen victims and witnesses to cooperate with law enforcement without fear of immigration consequences. In

30%
of Brooklyn
residents
are foreign-born

50

number of
outreach events
the Immigrant
Affairs Unit
participated in
in 2018

67%

decrease in
calls to the Office
Immigrant
Affairs Helpline

recent years, though, aggressive federal immigration enforcement—including in and around courthouses—has made this more difficult. Evidence suggests that fewer immigrants are making use of the resources available to them: the Immigrant Affairs Helpline received 457 calls in 2016, but less than 150 in 2018—a drop of more than 67%. The Office has been forced to reduce or dismiss cases because witnesses were too afraid to come forward and cooperate with authorities.

District Attorney Gonzalez has long been a leading voice in the fight to keep Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) out of our courthouses, speaking out against misguided practices that ignore the sensitive nature of these locations and ultimately make all of us less safe by reducing access to the justice system.

Despite the climate of fear that federal policy has created in immigrant communities, some victims do come forward, and the DA's Office has succeeded in prosecuting those who prey on vulnerable immigrant New Yorkers. The Immigrant Affairs Unit is staffed with specially trained attorneys who come from diverse backgrounds themselves, and who have access to translation services. These attorneys have a successful track record of overcoming cultural differences and language barriers to establish trust and build successful cases.

As part of a constant effort to reach out to and educate Brooklyn's immigrants about their rights, the District Attorney and members of the Immigrant Affairs Unit have hosted a series of immigration forums and participated in more than 50 outreach events throughout Brooklyn in 2018, working with partners from all parts of Brooklyn's diverse communities.

LABOR FRAUD UNIT

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

Every worker has the right to be paid the wages and benefits they earn and to be safe on the job. The Labor Fraud Unit protects these critical rights. The Unit investigates and prosecutes employers who steal their employees' wages and defraud government programs created to help workers. The Unit also investigates serious workplace injuries and fatalities, prosecuting contractors and others when they are criminally responsible for grievous harm.

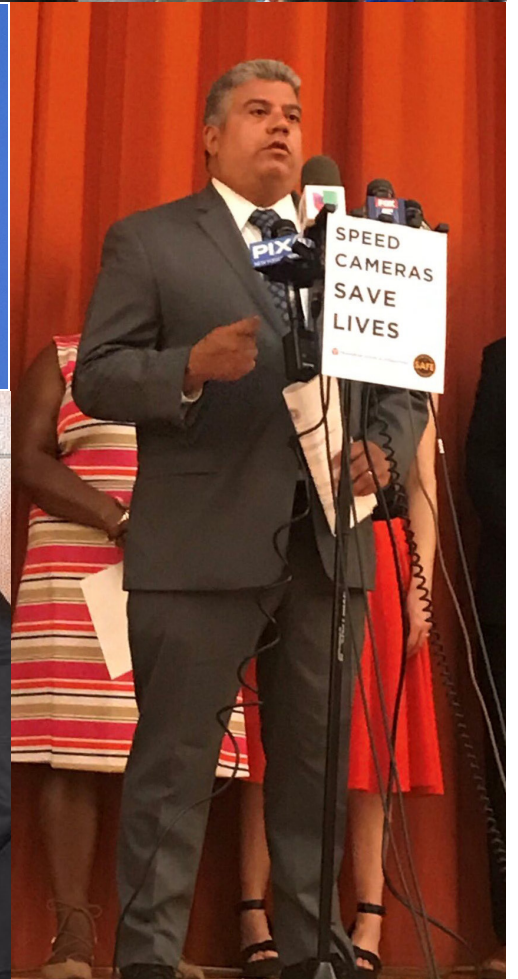
Since its inception in 2014, the Unit has secured more than \$2.3 million in restitution for individual workers in unpaid or underpaid wages, and more than \$2.3 million in additional fines and forfeiture. Unit prosecutions have resulted in five companies being barred from seeking government contracts for five years.

**\$2.3
million**
in restitution
to workers

**\$2.3
million**
in additional fines
and forfeitures

HEALTH CARE FRAUD UNIT

The Health Care Fraud Unit investigates fraud perpetrated against Medicaid, Medicare, and other health insurance plans, including managed care plans (HMOs). The Unit prosecutes fraud committed by providers (such as billing for services not provided), as well as fraud committed by recipients of public benefits. These investigations and prosecutions protect both taxpayers and patients.



FAIRNESS

Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office



DA Gonzalez in Criminal Court, successfully moving to vacate thousands of bench warrants and dismiss the underlying marijuana possession cases in an unprecedented effort to address the disproportionate and unfair impact of past enforcement practices.

The Brooklyn DA's Office is making the justice system fairer by reducing incarceration. We are building on existing alternative-to-incarceration programs with the goal of making programs like drug treatment, job training, and community service our default responses to prevent future crime, and making jail the "alternative."

6

Begin Again events

3,000

Marijuana summons
warrants cleared

2,000+

other summons
warrants cleared

BEGIN AGAIN

To help New Yorkers avoid the harsh and disproportionate consequences that can result from a summons warrant—and to strengthen community trust in law enforcement, ensuring that residents will not be afraid to call the police if they are a victim of or witness to a crime—the Brooklyn DA’s Office created Begin Again.

Begin Again events are held at churches in partnership with the Office of Court Administration, The Legal Aid Society, and Brooklyn Defender Services. Defense attorneys are present to offer free legal advice, and anyone with a low-level summons warrant can get the warrant vacated and the underlying summons dismissed without risk of arrest.

The Begin Again program was started to enable New Yorkers to safely and efficiently resolve summons warrants without fear of arrest, reducing unnecessary contacts with the criminal justice system.

Every year, thousands of New Yorkers are issued summonses for minor infractions, such as walking a dog without a leash, being in a park after dark, or having an open container of alcohol on the sidewalk. Until recent changes in law by the City Council, failure to respond to such a summons—because a person forgot to appear in court or couldn’t afford to pay the fine—resulted in a bench warrant for that person’s arrest. Under current law, most of these violations result in a civil summons that may lead to a civil fine, but not arrest or incarceration.

Once someone has a bench warrant, any contact with law enforcement will result in a mandatory arrest. Summons warrants also impede access to services like housing and education and, if someone is an undocumented immigrant, can lead to deportation.

For updates on future Begin Again events, follow DA Gonzalez on Twitter, **@BrooklynDA**.



MARIJUANA REFORM

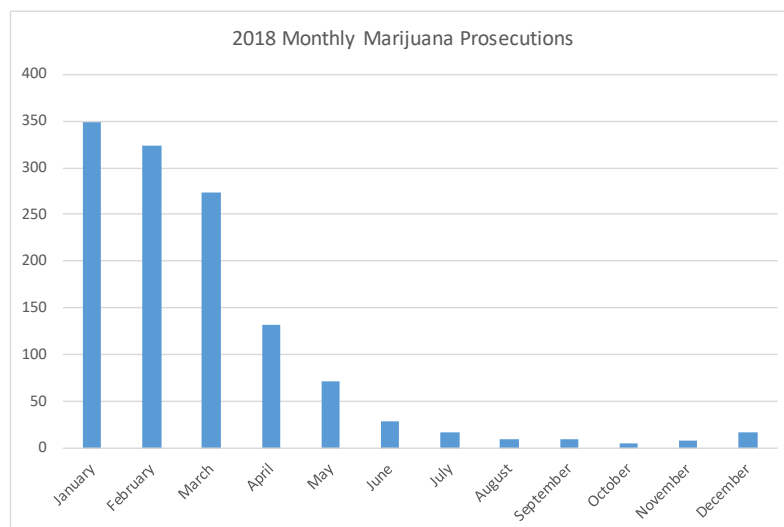
98%
decline
in marijuana
prosecutions
in 2018

District Attorney Gonzalez has virtually eliminated prosecution of marijuana possession offenses in Brooklyn and taken groundbreaking steps to remedy the disproportionate impact of past enforcement practices on people of color.

Across the country, attitudes toward marijuana use are changing. In many states, marijuana is now legal for adult use—New York may soon join them.

Even though people of all races use marijuana at roughly equal rates, people of color have been disproportionately impacted by marijuana enforcement for decades. Not only unfair, this enforcement doesn't work: it does not make us safer. The time and efforts of our police officers would be better spent engaged with the community and preventing crime rather than processing low-level arrests.

The Brooklyn DA's Office stopped prosecuting many marijuana possession cases in 2014. In 2018, DA Gonzalez expanded that policy to all but the most egregious smoking cases, including smoking in cars and on public transit. Overall, prosecutions of marijuana possession and smoking are down more than 98% in Brooklyn.



Since the Office no longer prosecutes these cases, it would be unjust for somebody to be subject to arrest for an outstanding warrant issued under old policies. Nobody should be burdened by a criminal record for this conduct. To correct this, DA Gonzalez has taken action to clear warrants for marijuana possession, and erase misdemeanor marijuana convictions.

In December, DA Gonzalez obtained the vacatur of more than 1,400 warrants for failure to appear in court on misdemeanor marijuana possession cases, as well as dismissal of the underlying cases. This followed an earlier motion to vacate more than 3,000 summons warrants issued in marijuana possession prosecutions.

DA Gonzalez has also worked with the Office of Court Administration and public defender organizations to vacate marijuana possession convictions—the first time in state history that a District Attorney has sought to erase criminal records for marijuana possession.

Recently passed legislation will automatically expunge past marijuana convictions, allowing people to get on with their lives and pursue opportunities without the burden of a criminal record.

1,400
misdemeanor
marijuana arrest
warrants vacated
in 2018

BAIL REFORM

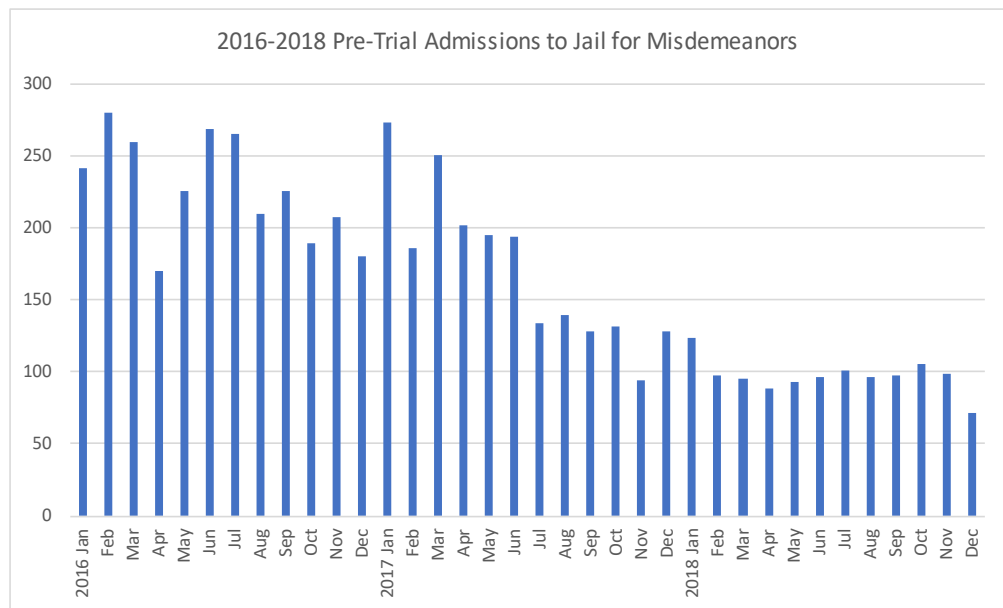
43%

decrease in
pre-trial
monthly
admissions
to jail for
misdemeanors
in 2018

District Attorney Gonzalez recognizes that poverty should not be the difference between pretrial freedom and incarceration, with even minor charges having the potential to lead to jail for people who cannot afford to pay bail.

To address this disparity, DA Gonzalez transformed the Office's bail policy. Previously, the default was to seek bail in misdemeanor cases, and prosecutors had to justify exceptions if they consented to release without bail. DA Gonzalez reversed that presumption in April 2017. Now, the default position is to release people charged with misdemeanors with no bail set—prosecutors are required to justify exceptions, in writing, when bail is requested.

As a result of this policy change, roughly 95% of misdemeanor defendants are released without monetary bail. Pre-trial monthly admissions to jail on these offenses are down nearly 58% since DA Gonzalez's change—more than 43% in 2018 alone. In 2019, we are expecting to see continued declines. This dramatic reduction in incarceration was achieved while serious crimes continued to decline almost across the board.



District Attorney Gonzalez is committed to treating all Brooklyn residents fairly—including our immigrant communities. That's why Brooklyn was the first DA's Office in the country to hire full-time immigration attorneys to support this mission. DA Gonzalez also implemented a policy to minimize unfair and disproportionately harsh collateral consequences of criminal convictions, particularly for low-level offenses. The DA is committed to fair and proportionate responses from the criminal justice system—these do not include deportation for minor offenders who do pose no risk to public safety.

To date, the Office's two immigration attorneys have consulted on more than 750 cases throughout the Office to ensure dispositions that avoided grossly unfair collateral consequences for minor offenses, including immigration-neutral outcomes when they were fair and safe. They have also worked with the Appeals Bureau on approximately 340 post-conviction relief motions. In some cases, individuals may be entitled to relief which would not trigger deportation. These policies help keep families together, and bolster trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement, which helps keep all Brooklyn residents safe.

DA Gonzalez also supported legislation, recently passed by the state legislature, to allow all state residents to obtain driver's licenses, regardless of their immigration status. Studies have shown that expanding access to driver's licenses reduces traffic fatalities and the rate of uninsured vehicles on the road; it decreases the footprint of the criminal justice system; and it reduces the chances of unfair deportation.

750
consultations by
Office immigration
attorneys to
avoid unfair,
disproportionate
collateral
consequences in
criminal cases

CONVICTION REVIEW UNIT

24
wrongful
convictions vacated
as of 2018

The Office's nationally-recognized Conviction Review Unit remains the largest such unit in the country, dedicated to identifying and seeking vacatur of wrongful convictions.

CRU investigates all aspects of a potentially wrongful conviction. Senior attorneys and investigators re-interview witnesses, consult with experts, and use the most up-to-date science and technology to identify defendants who are actually innocent, or whose convictions were obtained in violation of their due process rights. This includes forensic sciences like DNA, as well as social science research on issues such as faulty eyewitness identification, false confessions, and other practices that can lead to wrongful convictions.

The CRU's work is critical to public safety. If the wrong person is sitting in prison for a serious violent crime, the real perpetrator is still at large and a danger to the public.

Moreover, it offends our most basic sense of fairness, and corrodes public confidence in the justice system, for anyone to serve time in prison for a crime they didn't commit, or because they did not get a fair trial. As of December 2018, Brooklyn's CRU has secured the vacatur of 24 wrongful convictions, and the Unit has many more cases under review.

In addition to reviewing cases in Brooklyn, attorneys from the CRU share their expertise with other prosecutors' offices across the country.

Brooklyn's CRU staff has helped prosecutors' offices in Los Angeles, Detroit, Cleveland, Tampa, Boston, and elsewhere to create or improve their own Conviction Review Units.

Internally, CRU staff trains all new ADAs on the types of errors that most

commonly lead to wrongful convictions, so that these mistakes can be avoided in the future.

If a prosecutor ignores credible claims of wrongful conviction, it undermines public confidence in the justice system. Conversely, when the Brooklyn DA's Office vigorously investigates claims of innocence, exonerates innocent people, and admits mistakes, it sends a powerful message to the public that we can be trusted to pursue the truth—not just guilty verdicts.

COMMUNITY-BASED RESPONSES TO CRIME

Project CLEAR

372
eligible arrests

District Attorney Gonzalez is committed to making community-based responses to crime (commonly known as “alternatives-to-incarceration”) our go-to tools for promoting fairness and public safety—and making incarceration the “alternative” when no other response is consistent with promoting fairness and safety. The Brooklyn DA’s Office supports a wide array of programs to reduce incarceration and promote safety.

PROJECT CLEAR

342
screenings with
counselors

District Attorney Gonzalez believes that substance abuse is a public health problem that should not be met with a criminal justice response. That’s why he created Project CLEAR (Collaborative Legal Engagement Assistance Response)—a pre-arraignment diversion program to assist individuals who suffer from drug addiction without jailing them, or even charging them with a crime. By minimizing criminal justice involvement, the DA’s Office avoids unfairly hindering these individuals’ access to jobs, housing, education, and other basic services that are essential for success in the community.

86%
of participants
meaningfully
participated in the
program

Project CLEAR began in February 2018 as a pilot program in six Brooklyn precincts that experienced high drug overdose rates. In September, DA Gonzalez expanded the program to the entire borough of Brooklyn with the aim of further reducing incarceration, and connecting people who suffer from drug addiction with the services they need.

Through Project CLEAR, individuals arrested for misdemeanor possession of a controlled substance in the seventh degree (Penal Law Section 220.03) who are eligible for a desk appearance ticket (DAT) are given the option to resolve their cases by receiving

services rather than appearing in court.

A Peer Recovery Coach meets the individual at the precinct. Peers are non-law enforcement personnel who are trained to assist those suffering from drug addiction. They offer support and provide naloxone (an antidote for an overdose of heroin or other opioids), with instructions on its proper use. If necessary, the peer can provide immediate access to detoxification services.

Arrested individuals can decline to participate, appear for the scheduled court date seven days later, and have the case prosecuted in the traditional manner. But, if they agree to go to an assessment at EAC (Empower, Assist, Care) Network within seven days and engage in the recommended services during the following 30 days, the DA's Office exercises its prosecutorial discretion and declines to prosecute the arrests. The arrested individual does not have to appear in court and the arrest record is sealed. Throughout the process, the Legal Aid Society is available to assist both those who participate and those who opt not to participate in the program—a decision that has no effect on the disposition of their cases.

In ten months as a pilot and less than four months borough-wide, 372 arrests were eligible for the CLEAR program, 342 people met with peer counselors, and 58% accepted services. Of those, 86% meaningfully participated in the program, resulting in the DA's Office declining to pursue charges against 159 people. In addition, 233 people were provided with naloxone kits and training on how to use them.

DA Gonzalez's CLEAR program has been made possible by funding from the New York City Council and the Mayor's Office, as well as the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and other partners, including the NYPD, the Legal Aid Society, and EAC Network.

159
cases declined to
prosecute

233
received life-saving
Naloxone kits and
overdose response
training

OTHER SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAMS

The Brooklyn DA's Office endeavors to divert as many misdemeanor offenders as possible before arraignment to avoid unnecessarily entangling low-level offenders in criminal proceedings. In addition to pre-arraignment diversion, the Brooklyn DA's Office utilizes a comprehensive post-arraignment screening model for drug-involved defendants charged with non-violent felony and misdemeanor offenses. Prosecutors and court personnel identify most of these cases in Criminal Court arraignments. These cases are then adjourned to the next business day for screening and clinical assessments. Cases are routed to one of three specialized drug courts, based on the severity and type of offense. Recognizing that individuals who suffer from addiction are often reluctant to acknowledge their need for help, the DA's Office offers treatment opportunities to appropriate individuals even if the individual previously declined an invitation to participate in treatment.

Our Resource Engagement Program (REP) is a collaboration between the Office and the Brooklyn Misdemeanor Treatment Court. REP serves people arraigned on misdemeanor drug possession charges (because they were ineligible for or declined to participate in services through CLEAR), as well as certain non-drug cases where there is a strong indication of drug abuse. Program services aim to improve the defendant's quality of life and health, reduce exposure to the criminal justice system, and reduce overdoses. Without having to enter a plea, participants are asked to meet with treatment staff and engage in recommended services. These can include substance abuse treatment, treatment of other health conditions (including mental health), vocational screening and referrals, and general social service case management. All participants receive naloxone and are trained in its use. Once services are completed, the Office dismisses the case.

Defendants with prior military service have unique needs, frequently arising directly from their service to our country. Our Veterans Courts provide treatment utilizing specialized care offered by the Veterans Administration and several non-governmental providers. Each participant is assigned a veteran mentor for support. Brooklyn has two Veterans Courts: the Felony Veterans Court in Supreme Court for first-time felony offenders with substance abuse and mental health conditions; and the Brooklyn Misdemeanor Veterans Treatment Court, established in partnership with the Brooklyn DA's office in 2015, which is a point of access to treatment for misdemeanor defendants in Criminal Court who have prior military service.

MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

The Brooklyn DA's Mental Health Unit, in conjunction with the staff of the Brooklyn Mental Health Court, identifies and screens for diversion into treatment individuals accused of either felonies or misdemeanors who have been diagnosed with a severe and persistent mental illness. Defendants' treatment progress is carefully monitored to ensure public safety. In addition, the Unit, working with the clinical staff of a non-profit agency, screens and diverts into treatment offenders who, while having a serious mental condition, or intellectual disability, are not otherwise eligible for diversion through the Mental Health Court program.

JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM: RAISE THE AGE

In 2017, New York State enacted long-overdue legislation to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 16 to 18 years of age. Previously, New York had the dubious distinction of being one of only two states treating all 16- and 17-year-old adolescents as adults in the criminal justice system.

Research into brain development shows that young people are different from adults—their brains are not fully developed, and they lack the ability to fully control their behavior and appreciate its consequences. But because adolescents' brains are still developing, they are also more readily receptive to positive change. With appropriate interventions, young people can learn to make responsible choices and grow out of negative behavior.

93%
of eligible youth
were removed to
Family Court during
the first quarter of
the Raise the Age
implementation

While community-based treatment, counseling, and other services can help young people get on the right track, incarcerating them in adult jails with adult offenders can have lasting traumatic effects and make young people more likely to commit serious crimes in the future. We owe young people a second chance, and DA Gonzalez makes every effort to help all young people grow into adults who will play a positive role in their community.

Under the new law, all adolescents accused of misdemeanors, and many accused of felonies, will have their cases heard in Family Court (some violent felonies will be tried in a special Youth Part of Supreme Court staffed by Family Court judges). Offenders will not be burdened with the stigma of a criminal record, and they will be provided with a range of social services that help them avoid future criminal activity and have a proven track record with younger offenders. Detained adolescents are no longer held in adult correctional facilities, but rather facilities designed and staffed for young people. Raise the Age went into effect for 16-year-olds in October 2018, and 17-year-olds will be added in October 2019.

Established in the spring of 2016, the Brooklyn Young Adult Court (BYAC) provides age-appropriate interventions designed for emerging adults accused of misdemeanors, with particular focus on those at high risk of re-offending and those facing more serious criminal consequences. A designated judge with specialized training sits in the part, which is staffed by specially-assigned prosecutors from the Brooklyn DA's Young Adult Court Unit, as well as dedicated defense attorneys and social workers. All BYAC staff have received specialized training on the unique needs of young adults.

BYAC initially handled misdemeanors involving defendants ages 16 to 24; after the Raise the Age implementation removing 16- and 17-year-olds from the adult system, misdemeanor defendants age 18 to 24 will continue to have their cases heard in BYAC.

A specialized social worker performs an evidence-based risk-need assessment for all BYAC participants to identify the unique challenges facing each young person, as well as appropriate interventions to help them avoid future involvement with the justice system. The court allows defendants to participate in a range of these social service interventions in place of incarceration, including substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, anger management, GED classes, and vocational and internship programs. Interventions are determined by the risk level and particular needs of each defendant. All participants are given access to voluntary referrals and ongoing case management.

BYAC was created in collaboration with the Center for Court Innovation (CCI) and initially funded by a Smart Prosecution grant from the United States Department of Justice in 2015. BYAC was modeled on the Red Hook Community Justice Center, a community court the DA's Office created with CCI and the New York State Office of Court Administration (OCA).

97%
cases in
Brooklyn Young
Adult Court
resolved without
a criminal
conviction

RED HOOK COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

3,200
number of
misdemeanor
cases handled
by the Community
Justice Center each
year

The Red Hook Community Justice Center is the nation's first multi-jurisdictional community court, created to address the unique social and judicial needs of its surrounding neighborhood—the 72nd, 76th, and 78th Precincts—with one judge hearing criminal, civil, and housing matters that would traditionally be heard in different courthouses.

The Community Justice Center is a collaborative effort of the Brooklyn DA's Office, CCI, OCA, and the defense bar. A team of attorneys, handling about 3,200 misdemeanors and certain low-level felonies each year, is specifically assigned to Red Hook. They have an in-depth knowledge of the community and its needs, frequently attending community meetings and participating in neighborhood events.

As a problem-solving court, Red Hook seeks to resolve cases in ways that make amends to the community, address the needs of victims, and effectively change the behavior of defendants. A long-time Criminal Court judge presides and provides accountability by frequently monitoring participant progress. Services are also available to other community members, including those not accused of any crime.

Interventions often include intensive drug or alcohol treatment, mediation, anger management sessions, GED classes, youth groups, vehicular programs, and more. The courthouse is also the hub for an array of innovative programs that foster community participation and improve community trust in the justice system. These include a youth court, where teenagers are trained to resolve actual conflicts involving their peers.

Additionally, Red Hook has an AmeriCorps program (the New York Juvenile Justice Corps) and a housing resource center, which provides support to residents with cases in housing court.

PROJECT RE-DIRECT

Project Re-Direct is a community-based accountability program for young people ages 18 to 25 charged with their first felony offense—typically firearms possession—who have prior or current involvement with gangs or street crews. DA Gonzalez is one of the few prosecutors willing to consider this kind of alternative resolution in appropriate cases. The approach seeks to restore the individual to the community instead of the traditional criminal justice response, which often has unintended negative consequences.

Each candidate is carefully screened by experienced prosecutors and social workers to determine whether an offer of participation in Project Re-Direct is fair and consistent with enhancing public safety. Participants are required to plead guilty before beginning the program, with sentencing delayed pending their successful completion of the program.

The program, which typically lasts from 18 to 24 months, sets high standards for participant conduct and personal improvement, requiring electronic GPS monitoring as well as strict compliance with program regulations, including a dress code, a detailed schedule with a curfew, regular communication with staff, attendance at counseling sessions, drug testing, and active engagement in education and employment.

Infractions of program rules, such as a failed drug test, missed appointment, or new arrest, do not automatically result in expulsion from the program or imposition of the agreed-upon prison sentence. Program staff continually assess the demands of fairness and public safety, as well as participant needs, to ensure that program responses are proportionate.

15
number of
admissions to
Project Re-Direct
in 2018

YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES IN PARTNERSHIP (YCP)

55

new admissions
to YCP in 2018

<10%

of YCP graduates
were re-arrested
for violent
crimes from
2015-2018

Youth and Communities in Partnership (YCP) is another community-based accountability program operated by the DA's Office. Young men and women ages 18 to 25 facing their first felony charge may be eligible, provided they have no previous pattern of violent crimes or serious mental illness, and are not charged with any sex offense. YCP offers the prospect of a dismissal if the participant successfully completes the program. Candidates are individually screened by experienced prosecutors and social workers to determine the appropriateness of YCP participation.

YCP participants are required to change their perspective and behavior during the rigorous 12-month program, which includes regular communication with staff, community service, individual on-site counseling, education, and employment, in addition to any other court-ordered requirements. Some participants are assigned a mentor to guide and support their progress in the program.

As with Project Re-Direct, individual instances of non-compliance are carefully evaluated by program staff, and do not automatically result in termination. YCP's success has been demonstrated by its years of graduates, fewer than 10% of whom have been re-arrested for violent crimes after program completion.

Common Justice provides a unique diversion opportunity for certain felony offenders, including those who may have a criminal record. The program relies on restorative justice principles, which call upon people who have caused harm to take responsibility for their actions, apologize, and make amends to those they have harmed. The program requires active accountability and behavioral change on the part of participants—a marked departure from simply being incarcerated. Some people who have been victimized by crime find this process more meaningful than merely seeing the person who harmed them incarcerated.

Common Justice provides intensive services to harmed parties (survivors of crime) as well as responsible parties (person charged) in order to break the cycle of violence—frequently, people who have committed violent acts are themselves victims of prior violence.

Common Justice serves adults up to age 26 who are accused of certain lower-level felonies that may involve some degree of violence, such as robbery and certain assaults, and who do not need intensive mental health or substance abuse services. Sex offenses, shooting cases, and attempted murders are not eligible for Common Justice. All candidates who fit the eligibility criteria are individually screened by a committee of the District Attorney's executive staff to determine whether Common Justice participation would be a fair outcome consistent with public safety.

If a candidate is referred, a specially trained social worker at Common Justice contacts the harmed party to describe the program and ask for the harmed party's consent to admit the responsible party; cases where the harmed party objects are returned to the DA's Office for traditional prosecution. Harmed parties who are contacted regarding a Common Justice referral receive services from Common Justice, regardless of whether their case is resolved through the program.

76
defendants
screened as
potential
candidates for
Common Justice
in 2018

85%
of Common Justice
graduates do
not commit
new crimes

Candidates for Common Justice must plead guilty before entering the program, agreeing to a particular prison sentence to be imposed should they fail to complete the program. They must fully participate in the Common Justice program, including acknowledging the harm they have done and participating in a restorative justice process known as the circle, which includes harmed parties (or a representative). Participants must take responsibility for harm they have caused and come to an agreement about how they can make things as right as possible—a process the program refers to as “doing sorry.” Program staff monitor responsible parties’ adherence to the circle agreements—which may include restitution, extensive community service, and commitments to attend school and work—while supervising their completion of the 12-to-15-month intensive violence intervention program.

Responsible parties who successfully complete both their commitments to those they harmed and the violence intervention program do not serve the agreed-upon term of imprisonment. Instead, the DA’s Office dismisses the felony counts, leaving participants with a reduced misdemeanor or violation conviction.

In 2018, the Brooklyn DA’s Office screened 76 defendants and referred 44 as potential candidates for Common Justice. Of those, ten ultimately joined the program. (The rest were referred to other programs, rejected the program, pled guilty during the screening process, or were not allowed to participate due to the victim’s objection.) Sixteen responsible parties from Brooklyn are currently enrolled—three graduated in 2017 and four graduated in 2018.

Approximately 75% of participants successfully complete the program, and early review suggests that most graduates have not committed new offenses—an outstanding success rate for candidates who were charged with violent felonies, and in some cases, had prior felony convictions. Only eight participants (out of more than 100) have been removed from the program for a new crime since 2012.

SUPPORTING THE RE-ENTRY PROCESS

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

Approximately 2,500 individuals return to Brooklyn each year from some sort of incarceration. No matter the duration, incarceration can be traumatizing and place an individual at a disadvantage when returning to their community. The Re-Entry Bureau is committed to providing assistance and second chances to individuals who have been incarcerated.

For the DA's Office, successful re-entry means helping formerly-incarcerated individuals find appropriate housing and educational opportunities, develop employment prospects, and re-establish the best relationships possible with family members and loved ones. Individuals who achieve these goals are better equipped to avoid further criminal activity, contribute to their communities, and get on with their lives from a position of strength. Approximately 500 individuals received services or referrals from the Bureau in 2018. Depending on a participant's individual needs and circumstances, services can include substance abuse treatment, group and individual counseling (including anger management), job readiness workshops, high school equivalency degree classes, family services, mentor matching, life skills workshops, HIV/AIDS counseling and testing, health insurance enrollment, clothing assistance, pre- and post-natal support, educational advocacy, and assistance connecting with off-site services such as emergency shelters, job training, educational opportunities, and medical services.

If you or a loved one is or will be in need of re-entry services, you can contact the KCDA Re-Entry Bureau from 9am to 6pm at **718-250-3281** or **Reentry@BrooklynDA.org**. You may also visit us on the 3rd Floor of the Municipal Building at 210 Joralemon Street in Brooklyn or mail correspondence to Re-Entry 210 / KCDA, 350 Jay Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2908.

2,500
people return to
Brooklyn from jail or
prison each year

500
people received
services or
referrals from the
Re-Entry Bureau
in 2018



DA Gonzalez joined youth basketball leagues, NYPD officers, and neighborhood residents at Detective Liu & Detective Ramos Annual Community Day in Bedford-Stuyvesant, honoring two brave officers who gave their lives protecting the people of Brooklyn.

Prosecutors and law enforcement must work hand-in-hand with community members and leaders to build trusting and supportive relationships. Our society entrusts prosecutors with enormous discretion. The decisions that prosecutors make about how to use that discretion should be informed by community members' views on what safety and justice require in their neighborhoods. Law enforcement, prosecutors, and community members must work together to detect, prevent, report, and respond to crime.

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS

DA Gonzalez recognizes that keeping Brooklyn safe and strengthening community trust by ensuring fairness and equal justice for all is a collaborative endeavor that requires us to partner with the community. In the coming years, Neighborhood Safety Partnerships will be important vehicles for community input and engagement.

As the District Attorney seeks to reduce the unfair impact of past practices and over-incarceration in communities of color, while at the same time honoring his commitment to ensuring the safety of those same communities, we must partner with the communities themselves to understand their definition of safety and justice. While the Office seeks to rely less on incarceration and shift to community-based (as opposed to criminal justice) responses to crime, we must work with the community to develop new systems of accountability for behavior that causes harm.

Neighborhood Safety Partnerships will be an important venue for the DA's Office and community leaders to do that work together. The Partnerships will promote accountability and repair harms while also working to address the underlying conditions that give rise to violence in our communities.

Affinity groups organized around neighborhood, identity, and expertise will be engaged as we continue to refine and operationalize our understandings of safety, equity, wellness, and alternatives to incarceration. These groups will provide diverse viewpoints to the District Attorney, reviewing case studies and data, helping us develop metrics to measure outcomes, and making policy recommendations.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND RESOURCE CENTER

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

In 2019, the DA's Office will create a Community Empowerment and Resource Center. The goal of the Center is to make court-ordered community service a positive turning point in the lives of people convicted of crimes, leaving them better equipped to have a positive impact on their communities in the future.

Too often, individuals who have completed a sentence of community service are no better equipped to avoid future criminal justice involvement—or contribute positively to their community—than they were when they first entered the criminal justice system.

The Community Empowerment and Resource Center will facilitate access to resources including counseling, education, job training, and other resources under one roof. Those sentenced to community service will be given the opportunity to participate in more constructive programs, in lieu of typical community service assignments. This will enable participants to acquire tools and skills that will allow them to play a positive role in their communities.

COMMUNITY CONNECT

Public safety depends on so much more than arrests and prosecutions. Healthy communities require affordable housing, high-quality health care, education, child care, job training, mental health services, and more. Community-based organizations across Brooklyn provide these and other services, but people who need services often don't know where to turn to find help in their own neighborhoods.

Community Connect, a comprehensive resource guide, will be made available in print and online to help connect Brooklyn residents with the services they need to thrive. By making the DA's Office a resource for prevention rather than prosecution, District Attorney Gonzalez aims to strengthen community trust in his Office and empower Brooklyn residents to solve neighborhood problems themselves, even without a law enforcement response.

The resource guide will also help prosecutors in the DA's Office identify community-based, non-jail alternatives for defendants.

LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY BUREAU

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

The rule of law requires one standard of justice for all. This is especially important for members of law enforcement, who are empowered to make decisions and take actions that have profound impacts on individuals and communities. Misconduct by law enforcement damages public trust and undermines public safety.

To ensure that law enforcement misconduct is taken seriously and handled transparently, DA Gonzalez created a new Law Enforcement Accountability Bureau. The Bureau will fulfill one of the key recommendations of his Justice 2020 action plan, developing new protocols to ensure thorough investigation of officers suspected of misconduct. The Bureau will also develop data and analytics to identify possible patterns of misconduct.

DA Gonzalez is committed to transparency at every stage of the process. The Bureau will work with members of the community to develop protocols for keeping victims, family members, and the public informed in these cases.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To keep Brooklyn residents safe, the DA's Office must earn the trust of the communities we serve. That requires the DA and members of his staff to be present in the community—listening to residents, strategizing, problem-solving, and celebrating together. DA Gonzalez is committed to building trusting and collaborative relationships between his Office and the residents of Brooklyn's many diverse neighborhoods, and providing opportunities for citizens to engage with the Office outside of the criminal justice process itself.

The DA's Office of Public Engagement serves as the primary link between Brooklyn residents and the Brooklyn DA's Office. CommunityEngagementAssociatesregularlyattendandparticipate in community board meetings, police precinct council meetings, block and civic association events, and community celebrations to ensure that all Brooklyn communities have the opportunity to learn about the work of the DA's Office and provide feedback. The Public Engagement team also organizes presentations that connect Brooklyn residents who are concerned about a particular law enforcement issue with prosecutors who can provide information and assistance.

To learn more about the Office of Public Engagement, arrange for a presentation, or organize an event, please call the Office at **(718) 250-3888.**



VICTIM SERVICES UNIT

7,000
crime victims
served by VSU from
October 2017 to
December 2018

40
community
presentations
in 2018

District Attorney Gonzalez recognizes that being a victim of or witness to a crime can be a traumatic and disorienting experience. The Victim Services Unit (VSU) is dedicated to providing support, advocacy, and information to people who have been victimized in Brooklyn. Social workers and prosecutors collaborate to enhance criminal prosecutions and promote the safety and recovery of survivors. From October 2017 to December 2018, VSU served more than 7,000 crime victims and conducted approximately 40 community presentations and trainings with more than 800 attendees.

Unit staff provide services in Spanish, Russian, American Sign Language, Polish, and Mandarin, with translation services available in other languages. Among the services offered are:

- Safety planning
- Crisis intervention and short-term counseling
- Victim notification
- Information on court procedures and other related issues
- NYS Office of Victim Services reimbursement applications assistance
- Referrals to outside agencies

VSU PROGRAMS

Brooklyn Rising Against Violence Everyday (BRAVE)—BRAVE addresses high-risk battering behaviors, such as strangulation and stalking, and domestic violence in immigrant communities. Staff work closely with the NYPD and community organizations to provide services to immigrant women victimized by domestic violence, and conduct extensive community outreach and education.

Early Victim Engagement (EVE)—The EVE Project aims to contact complainants in domestic violence cases soon after the defendant first interacts with the criminal justice system.

Barrier Free Justice (BFJ)—Launched in 2000, BFJ is the first prosecution-based program that addresses the victimization of women with disabilities. BFJ is a collaboration of the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office and a number of community-based organizations.

Project Shield—Launched in 2004, Project Shield is a training program designed to increase awareness and improve response to sexual violence perpetrated against people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The project is a collaboration of the Brooklyn DA's Office and YAI/National Institute for People with Disabilities.

Teen Dating Violence Program—The Teen Dating Violence Program provides services to young people ages 13 to 21. This program seeks to break the cycle of violence through early victim intervention, advocacy, counseling, and referrals while providing education and outreach in the community.

Project SAVE—Project SAVE (Sexual Assault Victim Education) is a counseling and legal advocacy program that assists adult women who are victims of sexual assault navigate the criminal justice system, while also providing stakeholders and the community with information on issues related to sexual assault. Advocates and counselors consult with prosecutors in the Special Victims Bureau and are active participants in the Brooklyn Sexual Assault Task Force (BSATF), a multidisciplinary endeavor that works to improve access to services and criminal justice options, provides outreach to communities, and addresses training needs in sexual assault cases.

VSU SPECIALIZED SERVICES

Young Men of Color – VSU has specialized services for young men ages 16 to 24 who experience victimization. Young male victims often experience barriers to services, and VSU works with a variety of community agencies to facilitate access to support for this population.

Homicide Outreach—VSU reaches out to survivor families as quickly as possible after a homicide to provide information about victim compensation, referrals to therapeutic services, grief counselors, and community resources.

VSU operates Monday through Friday from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.. For assistance and information please call: **(718) 250-3820**.

YOUTH INITIATIVES

The DA's Bureau of Youth Initiatives (BYI) supports programs designed for elementary, middle, and high school children and youth, serving nearly 1,000 young people each year.

BYI programs include: anti-bullying workshops to increase awareness of the dangers associated with unhealthy usage of social media and the internet; a digital storytelling project to amplify the voices of youth influencers in Brooklyn by sharing their real-world experiences with cyber-bullying and online harassment; Friday and Saturday night basketball for 6th-8th grade students; chess instruction for 3rd-8th graders; high school internships in the Brooklyn DA's Office; an Explorers program for high school students to learn about careers in law enforcement; and mentoring for graduating 12th graders provided by staff members of the Brooklyn DA's Office.

For more information on BYI Programs, please contact: **edprograms@brooklynda.org** or **(718) 250-2331**.



TRANSPARENCY

*Brooklyn District
Attorney's Office*

District Attorney Gonzalez's vision for a national model of a truly progressive prosecutor's office—captured in his Justice 2020 action plan and a commitment to less incarceration, deeper community engagement, and greater investment of resources in driving down violent crime—requires better tools to track progress, measure success, and increase transparency.

\$600,000
granted to
partners
to diagnose
and improve Office
data capabilities

IMPROVING DATA COLLECTION

The DA's Office has worked with the Institute for State and Local Government at the City University of New York to secure grants from the Arnold Foundation and the William T. Grant Foundation to transform how we collect data and the ways we use it. The ISLG received a \$600,000 grant to conduct a diagnostic of the Office's data capabilities, including current data collection methods, systems, integration, and sharing, and how staff use data for policy analysis and to improve practice.

This diagnostic is already informing recommendations for needed investments in staffing and software to increase data capability and transparency. Ultimately, the Office will create a new performance measurement and management system that reflects DA Gonzalez's vision of reform and will allow him to hold staff accountable for positive outcomes. This system will also promote transparency by enabling the Office to generate regular progress reports for the public.

WORKING TO END RACIAL DISPARITIES

ISLG will also partner with the Brooklyn DA's Office in 2019 to conduct a comprehensive study of possible racial disparities in the operations of the Office. The results of the study will be made available to the public and will be used by the Office to reform its internal policies and practices.

Discovery in the criminal justice system is the process of disclosing the prosecution's evidence—including police reports, witness statements, and medical records—to defense attorneys. Timely and complete discovery is an essential part of ensuring a defendant gets a fair trial. The Brooklyn DA's Office has long been a leader in protecting the rights of defendants by turning over discovery much earlier than has been required by state law—typically weeks or months before other New York DA's offices would do so.

The importance of discovery reform has been a matter of growing public concern, culminating in sweeping reforms to the discovery statutes by the legislature in Albany, enacted in 2019 and scheduled to take effect at the beginning of 2020.

Building on our existing commitment to transparency—and our history of putting that commitment into action—the DA's Office will work to implement an electronic discovery system in 2019. This will make evidence available to defense attorneys even earlier in the process, and in an easily searchable format. Electronic discovery will save time and resources for the DA's Office, defendants, and the court system.



I am incredibly fortunate that every day, I get the chance to see the incredible work done by members of my staff—people who are committed, passionate, tireless, and some of the finest members of law enforcement anywhere—in their service to the people of Brooklyn. It is my very great privilege to be able to share just a small portion of that work with you in this Annual Report. There will always be more work to do, but that shouldn't stop us from reflecting on the great things we've already done.

To the men and women of this Office, I say: Thank you. Thank you for your service, your dedication, your unending willingness to take up the cause of making Brooklyn safer and fairer. Thank you for all the sacrifices each of you makes to be a part of the finest prosecutor's office in the country. And thank you for having the courage to look to the future, to the job that still lies ahead of us, and embrace it—you give me, and all the people we serve, hope for a better tomorrow.

And to the people of this borough, I say also: Thank you. It has been the great honor of my life to work on your behalf for the entirety of my career. Brooklyn is not a place or an idea—it's people. Safety and fairness and justice aren't about words on a page—they're about people. The people of Kings County deserve nothing short of excellence, and my staff and I will continue our work to make sure that you get just that in the District Attorney's Office.



CONTACT THE BROOKLYN DA'S OFFICE

The District Attorney's Action Center is available to assist the people of Brooklyn with criminal justice matters such as domestic violence, child abuse, school violence, immigration fraud, and illegal drug activity in their community. Complaints can be made anonymously, over the phone, or in-person. Trained specialists in the DA's Action Center are available to evaluate complaints and determine next steps to resolve a matter.

In an emergency, call 911.

If you or someone you know is the victim of a crime or has information about a crime, please visit, write or call:

The District Attorney's Action Center

350 Jay Street 16th Floor
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Action Center Hotline:

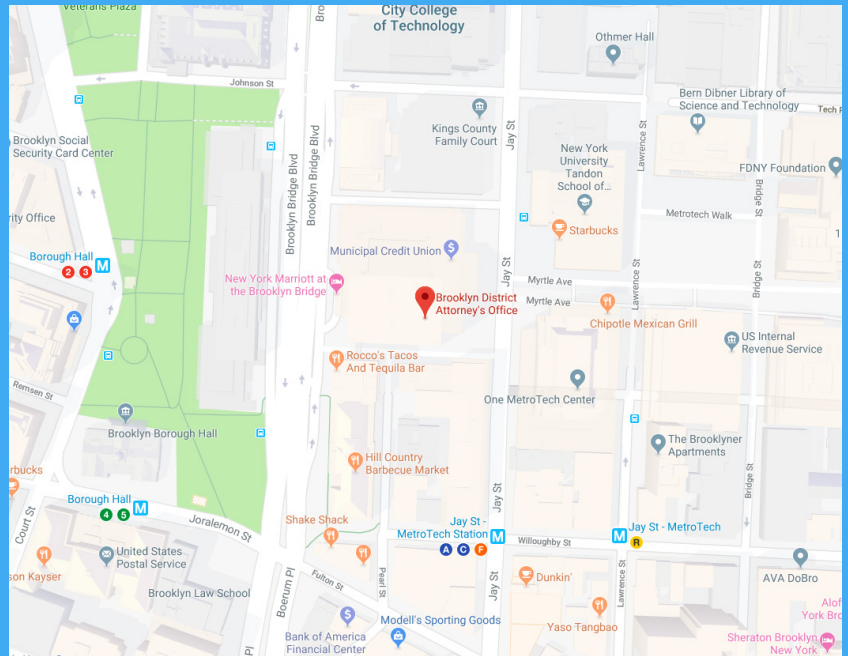
(718) 250-2340

(In case of an emergency, call 911)

Hours of Operation:

Monday through Friday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Walk-ins are welcome between 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.



Other Important Numbers

Victim Services Unit:	(718) 250-3820
Public Integrity Unit:	(718) 250-2747
Domestic Violence Bureau:	(718) 250-3300
Brooklyn Family Justice Center:	(718) 250-5111
Elder Abuse Unit:	(718) 250-5299
Immigrant Affairs Unit:	(718) 250-3333
Labor Fraud Unit:	(718) 250-3770
Human Trafficking Unit:	(718) 250-2770
Teen Dating Violence Program:	(718) 250-3321
Hate Crimes Bureau:	(718) 250-4949
Red Hook Community Justice Center:	(718) 923-8200
Re-Entry Bureau:	(718) 250-3281