



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

1 Centre Street, 19th floor, New York, NY 10007
(212) 669-8300 p (212) 669-4306 f
431 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027
(212) 531-1609 p (212) 531-4615 f
www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov

Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

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**Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Statement Regarding Proposed NYPD Amendment of Rules for Suspension or Revocation
of Press Credentials**

My name is Gale A. Brewer and I am the Manhattan Borough President. Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on these proposed rules.

A free and independent press is an essential partner in every constitutional government, and New York City is no exception. Local journalists act as a powerful check on institutions and leaders, keeping government transparent, and everyday people informed and engaged. This spring, our local press performed critical work, connecting and uniting us as New York City overcame its status as the global epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak. This summer, the same journalists have been instrumental in documenting city-wide protests, both cooperation and clashes between citizens and the NYPD, and amplifying the voices of activists calling for justice and accountability.

Journalists need access, official recognition, and protection to work effectively. They cannot hold our institutions accountable if they face retaliation from city leaders or those very same institutions. These proposed rules give the NYPD overwhelming authority to revoke press credentials for almost any reason, allowing them to end the careers of the very reporters who would hold them accountable. The NYPD's discretion is currently too broad. The NYPD should not be able to unilaterally decide who deserves to be called an official journalist in the City of New York. Therefore, I urge the NYPD under your leadership to rewrite the proposed rule changes, and I call on the Mayor to move credentialing authority to another agency.

A free press must remain free from outside influence today and every day. It is the bedrock of our public First Amendment freedoms.