

# New York State Court Clerks Association

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TINA CAROLEI  
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ANGELINA PEREZ  
RECORDING SECRETARY

Dear Senator Hoylman-Sigal and esteemed members of the Committees,

I am writing to express deep concerns regarding the operations, working conditions, and efficiency of the NYC Family Court, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by the courts in Kings County and Bronx. The ramifications of these challenges significantly impact both the dedicated clerks serving the court and countless New Yorkers dependent on the court's vital services.

The NYC Family Court, especially in Kings County, is grappling with an alarming shortage of clerks. This scarcity severely strains the existing workforce, forcing clerks to cover multiple courtroom parts. Such situations drastically diminish their efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, it's troubling that new clerks, without the benefit of comprehensive training, are frequently tasked with roles they are not adequately prepared for. This lack of training not only jeopardizes court operations but also places undue stress on these individuals.

Another issue exacerbating the strain on our clerks is the disproportionate workload, particularly evident in Brooklyn compared to other boroughs. This imbalance results in clerks often having to manage their assigned tasks alongside any unfinished duties from the previous days. Furthermore, the apparent mismanagement and inconsistent communication from supervisors, coupled with last-minute changes in assignments, further disrupt the clerks' routines and impede efficient task execution.

Concerning the working environment, the persistent cold conditions within the Kings County Family Court building, along with recurring plumbing challenges, create a less than ideal workspace. Moreover, frequent IT and system failures, especially with the UCMS, hinder crucial tasks. The incident on October 14, 2023, where the system went down without any established protocol for handling the consequent workload, stands as a testament to this pressing concern.

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Bronx Family Court's physical infrastructure is another pressing matter. There have been reports of significant water damage, rodent infestations, and occasional flooding during heavy rains, all of which call into question the building's safety and the well-being of its occupants.

Administratively, the denial of overtime, in light of the evident high workload, is baffling and only adds to the problem. Clerks, without the essential time and resources, are often left with incomplete tasks, which then contribute to a growing backlog. Moreover, the consistent issue of double and triple bookings on court calendars has created a ripple effect of delays, causing clerks to await vital information and thereby further increasing their burden.

In conclusion, the NYC Family Court, a cornerstone of our justice system, is at a critical juncture. It's imperative to recognize that the court's clerks, the system's very backbone, are stretched thin, lacking support, and operating under challenging conditions. To ensure the court continues to serve New Yorkers effectively, I implore the Committees to prioritize and address these concerns with the urgency they deserve.

I am optimistic that, with your leadership, we can foster positive changes to enhance the resilience and efficiency of our justice system. I am at your disposal for any further information or discussion on this matter.

Sincerely,

President Michael Greico  
New York State Court Clerks Association