

Summons Reform FACT SHEET

Over the past three years, several reforms, effected through both agency policy and legislative change, have [increased the fairness](#) of the criminal justice system by focusing on proportionality and safety. These reforms have resulted in a 37% drop in summonses—usually issued for offenses like drinking alcohol in public—since 2013, as quality of life has been maintained.

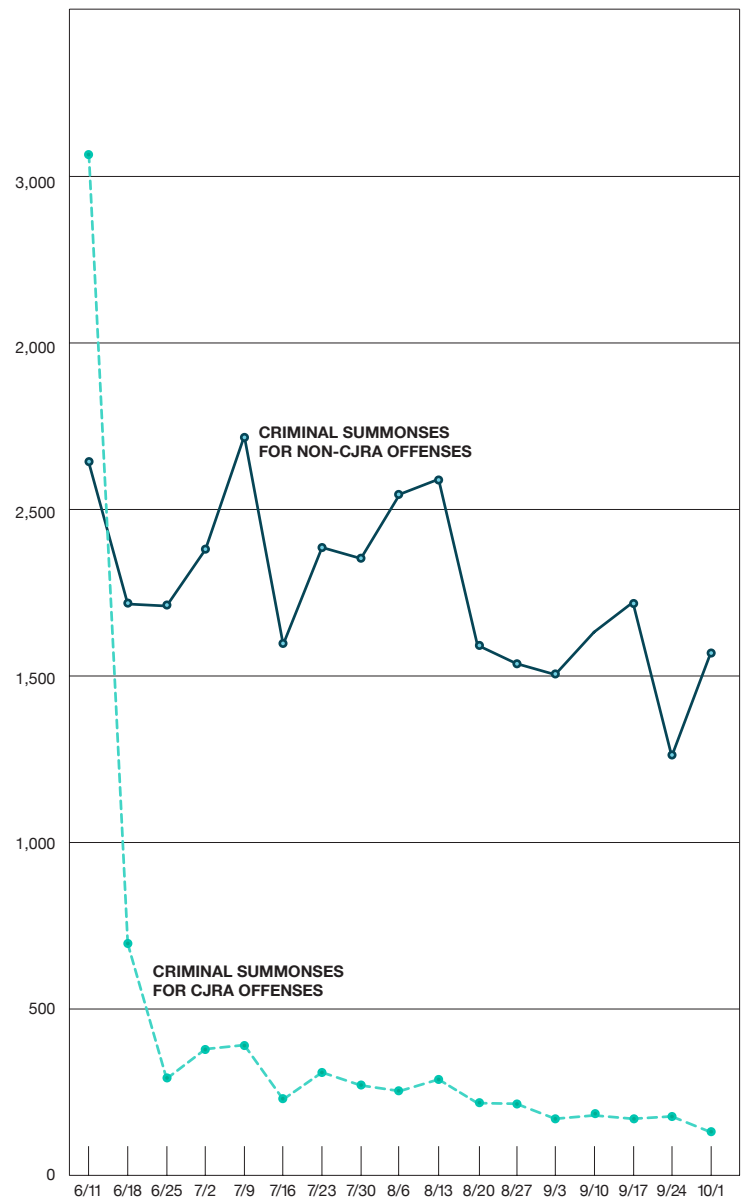
In a further step towards fairness, accountability and proportionality, the **Criminal Justice Reform Act (CJRA)**, a new piece of legislation passed by the City Council and signed by the Mayor which went into effect in June 2017, gives the police the option to issue civil summonses instead of criminal summonses for some common low-level offenses. This option will be available for approximately 50% of the summonses that have previously been treated criminally. Criminal charges can have a negative impact on people’s ability to obtain citizenship and restrict their eligibility for housing or certain types of employment. Civil summonses are similar to traffic tickets, and compliance is ensured through means that do not involve arrests or warrants. Civil summonses will be adjudicated by the City’s administrative tribunal, the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH). They can be resolved by completing community service instead of paying a fine. Implementing this strategy is the latest step the City is taking toward lower-level enforcement in order to promote fairness while also ensuring that New York remains one of the safest big cities in the country.

Eligible offenses for CJRA civil summons:	Offenses resulting in criminal summons:*
Open container of alcohol	Disorderly conduct
Public urination	Possession of marijuana
Parks offenses	Trespassing
Littering/ spitting	
Unreasonable noise	

*common examples of offenses not eligible for civil summonses

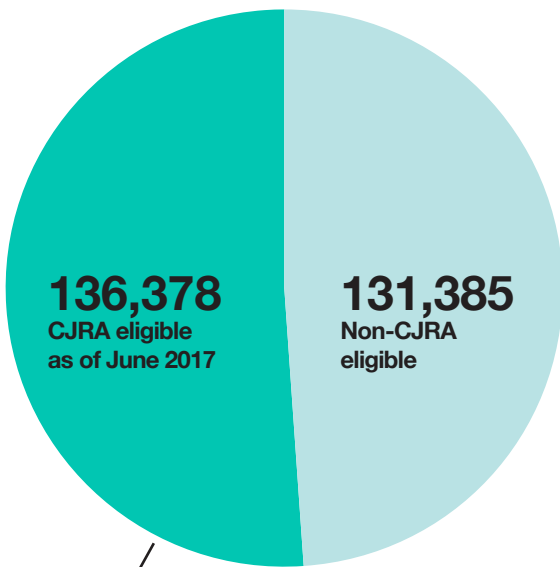
CIVIL VS. CRIMINAL SUMMONSES

Since the implementation of CJRA in June 2017, NYPD officers are issuing fewer criminal summonses for CJRA-eligible offenses. The issuance of criminal summonses for non-CJRA eligible offenses has declined slightly over the same period.



EFFECT OF LAW ON CRIMINAL SUMMONSES

Of the approximately 268,000 criminal summonses issued in 2016, more than half of them were for offenses that police now have the option to treat civilly.



Officers are now issuing civil summonses, rather than criminal, for these offenses.

Source; pie chart: OCA Summons Disposition and Warrant Data 2016; NYPD Compstat Year-end Book 2016. Source; line chart: NYPD, Weeks of 6/11/17 to 10/1/17.

Criminal and civil summonses 2016 & 2017

Early results indicate that NYPD officers are not only issuing fewer summonses overall than this time last year, but are also issuing civil summonses rather than criminal in the vast majority of CJRA-eligible encounters.

