



The Council of the City of New York
Office of Council Member Andy King



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 22, 2018

CONTACT: **OATH** - MARISA SENIGO, MSENIGO@OATH.NYC.GOV (646) 285-3619

HON. ANDY KING - STEPHANNIA CLEATON, SCLEATON@COUNCIL.NYC.GOV (718) 684-5509

NYC Council Member Andy King and Hon. Fidel F. Del Valle, Commissioner and Chief Administrative Law Judge of the NYC Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH), To Host First “OATH School at the Pool” Event in the Bronx

Bronx, NY—On Thursday, August 23, 2018, OATH Commissioner and Chief Administrative Law Judge, Fidel F. Del Valle, will partner with NYC Council Member Andy King to bring information about how to deal with City-issued summonses to the residents of the Baychester, Co-op City, Laconia and Williamsbridge sections of the Bronx. The first-ever Bronx “OATH School at the Pool” outreach event will take place at the NYC Parks Department’s Haffen Park Pool.

The outreach event will focus on the **Criminal Justice Reform Act (CJRA)** and how New Yorkers can fight some of the most commonly issued summonses which are given out during the summer months in parks and at beaches, including summonses issued for open container of alcohol, drinking in public, public urination, excessive noise, being in a park after dark, and nearly a hundred types of other alleged Parks Department violations. Most of these summonses used to be filed in Criminal Court but under the CJRA are now filed by the NYPD and Parks Department at the City’s administrative law court, OATH.

“This educational partnership with OATH is about fairness, transparency and understanding how things are now being done under the Criminal Justice Reform Act,” **said Council Member Andy King**, chair of the Committee on Juvenile Justice. “If a person receives a ‘summer’ summons, it’s not all doom and gloom. The summons can be disputed at OATH through a convenient hearing option of their choice.”

“New Yorkers deserve a level playing field when contesting City-issued summonses and people need to know that they have the absolute right to fight a City-issued summons, and when they do, that their case will be heard by an independent decision-making body,” **said Commissioner and Chief Administrative Law Judge, Fidel F. Del Valle**. “By being in the community talking to people who have received summonses and bringing information about the newly simplified hearing process directly to the places where in the summer months summonses are issued, OATH is showing New Yorkers that its hearing process is easy to navigate and that it is fair and transparent.”

At the event, Commissioner Del Valle spoke in detail about the outreach that OATH is doing at parks and beaches during the summer months, the impact and effects of the Criminal Justice Reform Act (CJRA) and the new community service option that is available for these cases which are now filed at OATH, the City's administrative law court, instead of being filed in NYC Criminal Court.

The Council Member spoke about why it's important for the constituents in his district to know about the changes in how summonses issued during the summer months are now handled and the importance of responding to a summons and how easy it can be with the options provided by OATH.

About OATH

The NYC Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH) is the independent administrative law court where nearly all City enforcement agencies file their summonses for hearings. The agencies that file summonses at OATH for hearings include the Departments of Sanitation, Buildings, Health, Parks, Environmental Protection, Consumer Affairs, FDNY and NYPD, among many others; however, OATH does not handle parking tickets or traffic tickets. **Last year, OATH received approximately 850,000 summonses from the City's various enforcement agencies and the CJRA is expected to divert 80,000 cases from Criminal Court to OATH each year.** During that time, 44% of summonses that were fought at OATH hearings were dismissed by OATH Hearing Officers.

OATH made a quick 2 minute video that explains the CJRA and what changes now that the law is in effect. The informational video is available on the OATH website. OATH offers recipients of summonses convenient hearings options such as Hearings Online, Hearings by Phone, Hearings by Webcam and Hearings by Mail. It also offers free translation services for all hearings and document/form submissions.

###