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B.P. Brewer, Council Member Chin, and OATH announced an upcoming town hall for Chinatown business owners.

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NEWS FROM
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Borough President Brewer, Council Member Chin, Council Member Kallos partner with OATH Commissioner Del Valle to host March 22 “What to do if you get a summons” town hall for Chinatown residents and businesses

NEW YORK – NYC elected and public officials will partner with local community groups and associations based in Chinatown to put on an educational event, **How to Respond to Summonses from NYC Enforcement Agencies**, on **March 22, 2017**.

The event will be hosted by Fidel F. Del Valle, Commissioner and Chief Administrative Law Judge of the NYC Office of Administrative Trials & Hearings (OATH) in partnership with Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer and Council Member Margaret S. Chin.

The March 22 event will be held from **6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** at the Yung Wing Auditorium at P.S. 124 which is located at **40 Division Street, Manhattan**. The event is open to anyone interested in attending. Partnering organizations will help ensure that Mandarin and Cantonese translators are available at the event.

Organizations co-sponsoring the event include the Asian American Federation, Chinese-American Planning Council, Chinatown BID and Chinatown Partnership, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, Hamilton-Madison House, Immigrant Social Services, Inc., Indochina Sino-American Senior Citizen Center Inc., and the New York Immigration Coalition.

At the event will be OATH representatives, representatives from the Manhattan Borough President’s

Office and the Office of Council Member Margaret S. Chin, as well as Council Member Ben Kallos, Chair of the City Council's Committee on Government Operations. Leaders from the event's partner organizations will also be in attendance.

Commissioner Del Valle will discuss what to do when a summons is received from a City agency, OATH's translation services, and OATH's remote hearing options which make fighting a summons more convenient since recipients of summonses do not have to go to hearings in person. Borough President Brewer and Council Member Chin will then moderate a question and answer session between audience members and OATH representatives.

"New Yorkers and small businesses deserve a level playing field when contesting City-issued summonses and the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH) continues to work towards the goal of creating a truly user-friendly court. Partnering on informational events like the one in Chinatown gives OATH the opportunity to provide residents and small businesses with important information about the hearing process and the many options that are available to them should they or their business receive summonses from the City's various enforcement agencies," said **OATH Commissioner and Chief Administrative Law Judge Fidel F. Del Valle**.

"Nothing about city government, even enforcement processes, should be confusing or intimidating," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "By bringing OATH officials into the community to provide information and answer questions, we can arm business owners with what they need to know to avoid unnecessary fines, comply with the law, and interact with government agencies and administrative law judges with confidence."

"This partnership with OATH is part of an ongoing effort to make navigating City agencies easier for all New Yorkers, regardless of where in the City they are, or what language they speak," said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin**. "I thank OATH for holding this event, and Borough President Brewer and Chair Kallos for helping spread the word about these important resources for Chinatown business owners."

"OATH is setting a good example for all agencies by proactively reaching out to residents and businesses to help them understand regulations and navigate the City's court system," said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. "The City's goal must be to help residents and businesses comply with the law by providing a streamlined and easy-to-understand system to address violations. With this event, we are doing just that."

"In these times of fear and uncertainty, it is critical that our Asian and immigrant communities have access to reliable information about how to respond to the immigration policy changes that are affecting their lives on a daily basis. This forum will provide needed resources from city leaders who both have deep familiarity with the systems that are involved in responding to these immigration policies and

understand the particular challenges our communities face. We thank our leaders for being responsive to the communities' needs and encourage everyone to join us for this important discussion," said **Jo-Ann Yoo, executive director of the Asian American Federation.**

"Lack of understanding of rules and regulations is one of the top 3 concerns as identified by a recent NYC Asian American small business report (the other two being lack of credit and high rent), this timely workshop will help save a lot of merchants not only a lot of money but a lot of grief as well. What you don't know can hurt you in this town, well done for bringing information to our communities," said **Wellington Z. Chen of the Chinatown BID and Chinatown Partnership.**

"We are pleased to see that OATH is an impartial system that will be fair, convenient, and less punitive for all New Yorkers," said **Isabel Ching, Executive Director of Hamilton-Madison House.**

"Immigrant Social Services (ISS) is pleased to partner with OATH Commissioner Fidel Del Valle, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Council Member Margaret Chin and the many great organizations in the Chinese/Asian American community. The informational session to assist the Chinatown community residents and businesses on how to respond to summons from various city enforcement agencies provides a clear demonstration of governmental responsiveness and it is sorely needed. ISS applauds this critical effort and is looking forward to furthering these partnerships in the future," said **Charles Lai, Executive Director, Immigrant Social Services, Inc.**

"Indochina Sino-American Community Center (ISACC) has provided immigration and naturalization services to its community for 25 years. On behalf of ISACC, at this time of uncertainty and challenges in immigration policies, we are committed to assist those in urgent need of fighting summons and other issues together with Oath, city agencies, and other nonprofits. It is also our honor and responsibility to support immigrants to live and work without fear in this city," said **Edward Fang, Executive Director, Indochina Sino-American Community Center.**

OATH is the City's independent and impartial administrative law court. It is the court where all City agencies – including the Departments of Buildings, Sanitation, Environmental Protection, Health and Mental Hygiene, Consumer Affairs, among many other enforcement agencies – file the summonses that they issue for hearings and decisions.

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