



The Office of Staten Island Borough President
James Oddo



The Council of the City of New York
Office of Council Member Steven Matteo

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**Staten Island Borough President Oddo, Council Member Matteo and
OATH Commissioner and Chief Administrative Law Judge Fidel F. Del
Valle Announce First-ever “Neighborhood Pop-Up Court” in Staten Island
for City-issued Summonses**

Staten Island, NY - On Thursday, June 28, 2018, Staten Island Borough President Oddo and Council Member Matteo will partner with OATH Commissioner and Chief Administrative Law Judge, Fidel F. Del Valle, to bring the first-ever Staten Island *Neighborhood Pop-Up Court* to the District of Council Member Matteo. The event will take place at the Staten Island JCC, located at 1466 Manor Road, Staten Island, NY 10314. *Neighborhood Pop-Up Courts* is a brand new initiative offered by the NYC Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH), which is the City’s independent administrative law court and where all City agencies file their regulatory and enforcement summonses for hearings.

“As the City’s central independent administrative law court, OATH’s top priority is to make it as easy as possible for those who have been issued summonses from City enforcement agencies to have their day in court,” said **OATH Commissioner and Chief Administrative Law Judge, Fidel F. Del Valle**. “*Pop-Up Courts* is just the latest innovative program OATH has employed and joins other established programs such as our Hearings Online, Video Hearings, Hearings by Phone, and Hearings by Mail, all of which aim to make fighting a summons from a City agency as convenient and time-efficient as possible for New York City residents and small businesses.”

“This pop-up court will make it easier for Staten Islanders to fight summonses in a location that is convenient for them,” said BP Oddo. “Thank you to OATH for working with my office and Council Member Matteo to bring the pop-up court concept to the Mid-Island. I hope all Staten Islanders who are eligible take advantage of this unique opportunity,” said **Staten Island Borough President Oddo**

“For Staten Islanders, trying to get to the OATH court room in Lower Manhattan to contest a summons, especially during work hours, is anywhere from extremely difficult to impossible. That is why we advocated for OATH to hold a neighborhood “pop-up” this month, to make it easier and more convenient for Islanders to appear at a hearing and to give our constituents a better chance to get a fair shake. I urge any resident or business owner with Sanitation or Health Department summonses with upcoming hearing dates to take advantage of this opportunity and attend this event on June 28,” said **Council Member Matteo**

Through this brand new initiative, OATH will be traveling to neighborhoods across the five boroughs with Hearing Officers in order to conduct hearings directly in the community at Community Boards, libraries, offices of elected officials and other civic organizations in an effort to increase response rates to City-issued summonses and to make it more convenient for people to access justice at the City’s administrative law court. There are various negative consequences that can occur if a summons is not responded to in the manner required; among them is that if a summons is not responded to on or before the hearing date then a higher penalty is typically imposed. This is due to the fact that all City enforcement and regulatory agencies set their penalties in law and most agencies make the penalty amounts higher for summonses that default or are not responded to in the correct, timely way.

OATH’s *Neighborhood Pop-Up Court* initiative involves a case-specific, mail marketing outreach campaign that targets recipients of summonses issued by the Department of Sanitation and certain summonses issued by the Health Department that have upcoming hearing dates and that have not already been paid. These types of cases do not require that the issuing agency or inspector be present at the hearing, so respondents are able to meet one-on-one with the OATH Hearing Officer and tell him or her why they believe that the summons should be dismissed. After the hearing, the decision will be mailed within 10 days to both the summons-issuing agency and the person who received the summons.

OATH’s Public Affairs and Communications Office is estimating that more than 300 letters will be sent out to recipients of summonses that are eligible to have their case heard at the upcoming Pop-Up Court on Staten Island on June 28, 2018. In addition to alerting respondents that their case is eligible to be heard at the Pop-Up Court, the letter also informs the recipient of their right to fight the summons remotely online, by phone, by webcam or by mail if they choose not to attend the Pop-Up Court to have their hearing in person. Of course, recipients of summonses can also go to the Staten Island OATH Hearing Office located at 350 St. Marks Place on the east side of the Island on the day of their scheduled hearing should they want to contest the summons in person there.

About OATH

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. Last year, OATH

received approximately 850,000 summonses from the City's various enforcement agencies and during that time 44% of summonses that were fought at OATH hearings were dismissed by OATH Hearing Officers.

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