



New York City Comptroller
Scott M. Stringer

NEWS

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COMPTROLLER STRINGER CALLS ON CITY'S DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF EMERGING IMMIGRANT SENIOR CITIZEN COMMUNITIES

(New York, NY) – On Tuesday, New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer released a [letter](#) in which he called upon New York City's Department for the Aging (DFTA) to outline what efforts it had taken to meet the needs of emerging immigrant communities across the City and to urge DFTA to ensure culturally-sensitive programming and staffing is available at senior center facilities throughout the five boroughs.

"The Department for the Aging must serve all populations in our City in ways that are culturally and religiously sensitive to the seniors using its facilities," Comptroller Stringer said. "We are a City of immigrants. DFTA should ensure that it is meeting the diverse needs of emerging immigrant communities with compassion and respect."

In recent months, the Comptroller's office has received complaints about the lack of language and dietary services offered to seniors of South Asian origin. The Comptroller called on DFTA to take the following steps:

- Create a plan to address the needs of emerging immigrant groups in senior centers;
- Ensure staff at senior centers are able to communicate and are culturally sensitive to seniors who belong to these emerging groups;
- Survey emerging communities to ensure senior centers meet the dietary needs of these seniors; and
- Conduct programmatic planning to meet the cultural and religious needs of the emerging immigrant senior population.

Nearly 1 in 10 of the nation's immigrant seniors live in New York City. In 21 out of the city's 55 Census-defined neighborhoods, immigrants already account for a majority of the senior population.

"We are asking DFTA to take small steps that would go a long way toward showing they are responsive to the changing demographics of our City," Stringer said.

"The South Asian community has emerged as one of the fastest growing communities in New York. Our city programs and services need to match this growth especially in the area of senior services. It is unacceptable for our seniors to be without need based senior programs that understand their language and culture. We demand the Department for the Aging to develop a plan for our community without any further delay," said Maf Uddin, ASAAL President and Founder.

"South Asian seniors are one of the largest groups of immigrant seniors in New York City. India Home offers senior programs that are culturally competent and in-language. The need is tremendous and we need greater support and resources to fulfill the needs of these seniors," said Dr. Vasu Kalasapudi, Executive Director of India Home.

[Click here to view the letter](#)

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