



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER  
BRAD LANDER



**JUMAANE D.  
WILLIAMS**

July 22, 2025

**Via Email**

Commissioner James S. Oddo  
New York City Department of Buildings  
280 Broadway  
New York, NY 10007

Commissioner Robert S. Tucker  
New York City Fire Department  
9 MetroTech Center  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

**Re: Reports of Unsafe Conditions and Potential Building Violations  
26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY  
Block 1056, Lot 50, Manhattan**

Dear Commissioners Oddo and Tucker,

We write in response to [reports](#) of inhumane and dangerous conditions at the 10<sup>th</sup> floor processing facility in 26 Federal Plaza—conditions that should be of urgent concern to both the Department of Buildings (DOB) and the Fire Department (FDNY), given your responsibilities for ensuring compliance with building, zoning, occupancy, and fire safety codes. We request that your agencies conduct an immediate inspection to determine whether any of New York City’s laws are being violated, and what action is required.

Recent [news reports](#) describe individuals being held for days in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions at the 10<sup>th</sup> floor of 26 Federal Plaza, in areas that were not designed for shelter, hotel, or residential uses. These reports indicate that those detained have inadequate access to food and medical care, raising serious concerns of human rights abuses. My office has received numerous constituent inquiries from New Yorkers with loved ones detained there, reporting limited access to visits and phone calls and concerns about the overall well-being of those in custody.

Despite the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) claims that the 10<sup>th</sup> floor is a short-term processing center not intended for overnight stays, individuals are reportedly being held there for extended periods—for up to 10 to 15 days in some cases. DHS has denied multiple members of Congress entry, insisting the floor is a “short-term” processing center, not a detention center facility over which Congress has oversight. Yet U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has [acknowledged](#) that individuals have been forced to sleep on the floor overnight with no accommodations for sleeping. By ICE’s own admission, the space is being utilized for an unintended purpose.

This raises serious concerns about whether the federal government is violating local building, zoning, occupancy, and fire codes—including but not limited to potential breaches of occupant load limits. If the 10<sup>th</sup> floor processing center is being used as a de facto jail or detention facility, that use could violate New York City's local zoning laws.

There is precedent for City intervention: DOB and other agencies have previously inspected 26 Federal Plaza and issued violations to the U.S. General Services Administration. Given the clear risk that conditions on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor may pose a danger to human life and be in violation of City zoning, buildings, and fire codes, DOB and FDNY must urgently apply their authority here to ensure compliance with the law and protect the public.

We urge DOB and FDNY to immediately inspect the conditions of 26 Federal Plaza and use every tool available to ensure that New York City's zoning, building, and fire codes are complied with, in order to protect New Yorkers.

Thank you for your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Lander', with a stylized, cursive script.

New York City Comptroller Brad Lander

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Williams', with a stylized, cursive script.

New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams