



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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WITH AGEISM ON THE RISE ACROSS NYC WORKPLACES, NYC COUNCIL INTRODUCES HISTORIC PACKAGE TO COMBAT AGE DISCRIMINATION

CITY HALL – Today, Council Member Margaret S. Chin introduced a legislative package to tackle age discrimination in the workforce. The bills – which force the City to employ new tools to test for cases of age discrimination, build resources for workforce development and advocacy for older adults, and expand outreach and training – seek to reinforce New York City’s commitment to build a truly age-friendly city where older workers feel safe and supported in their jobs.

“With one in two New Yorkers over the age of 50 experiencing or witnessing age discrimination, we need to talk honestly about how pervasive this form of prejudice is, instead of attempting to sweep these cases and fears under the rug,” said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin, Chair of the Committee on Aging**. “Sadly, age discrimination is rarely treated with the same level of urgency as other types of workplace discrimination. The result is a culture of silence and shame around ageism that devalues older workers. Our bill package breaks that stigma by requiring the New York City Commission on Human Rights to conduct investigations into the workplace, to establish an Office of Older Workforce Development, create an Age Discrimination Task Force, and require more awareness and outreach and training to educate the public. I want to thank Council Member Ayala, as well as my fellow members of the Women’s Caucus, for joining me on these bills, as well as the advocates for providing their vital input.”

Last year, the New York City’s Commission on Human Rights received 193 age-related inquiries, 119 of which pertained to discrimination in employment. At the same time, older workers are becoming a larger part of the workforce. According to a report authored by the New York City Comptroller’s office, the number of working older adults increased by 62 percent from 2005-2015, and the number of seniors in the City’s labor force increased from 13 percent to 17 percent.

"I am proud to be partnering with Council Member Chin to introduce legislation that will help combat age discrimination in the workplace," said **Council Member Diana Ayala**. "Age discrimination, which disproportionately impacts women, can take a negative toll on a person's emotional, social, and mental wellbeing. As lawmakers in a city with a growing aging population, it is imperative we take bold, concrete steps to address this issue."

The package of bills would:

- Create an **Office of Older Adult Workforce Development** to assist older adults in joining or re-joining the workforce
- Create an **Age Discrimination Task Force** to study the instances and consequences of age discrimination in the workplace, and submit a report with recommendations related to how the city can establish mechanisms resources and services to help older adults who were subject to discrimination
- Require the **New York City Commission on Human Rights (NYCCHR)** to investigate ageism in the workplace
- Require the **NYCCHR** to develop training and complementary materials that would help identify, prevent, and eliminate age discrimination in the workplace
- Require the **NYCCHR** to create a poster on age discrimination and provide additional age discrimination resources on its website. It also requires agencies to display the poster in employee common areas

"On behalf of thousands of workers over age 50 in NYC who live in quiet desperation for fear of losing their job or not getting hired due to ageism, we applaud Councilwoman Margaret Chin and Councilwoman Diane Ayala for introducing this groundbreaking legislative package addressing age discrimination in the workplace," said **Bobbie Sackman, Workplace Justice Coordinator, Radical Age Movement**. "The time for age justice in the workplace has come. Older New Yorkers are part of the future, too. We are the fastest growing sector of the city's population and workforce. New York City has an opportunity to be a national leader by saying this is not how we do business."

"We applaud Council Member Chin for shining a light on the issue of age discrimination in the workplace," said **Chris Widelo, AARP NY Associate State Director**. "This legislation is a good first step in what needs to be a multi-pronged approach to investigate instances of age discrimination in the workplace and educate employees and employers alike so that it doesn't happen in the first place. We look forward to working with Council Member Chin and the entire Council to see that these measures become law."

"At LiveOn NY, we know that as we age, we build an incredible amount of momentum, and older New Yorkers use that cumulative momentum to power up the economy, the political system, and their communities," said **Allison Nickerson, Executive Director, LiveOn NY**. "We further believe that the desire to work and learn has no age cut-off. Age discrimination in the workplace is a reality that affects many older New Yorkers, and we commend Council Member Chin for introducing legislation to call attention to

this issue. This is a necessary first step to educate employers and employees across many sectors about the presence and signs of ageism. We look forward to working with Council Member Chin, City Council, and the Administration to shine a light on this crucial issue."

In 2017, AARP conducted a nationwide survey which found that 61% of older workers—employees age 45 and above—experienced some form of age discrimination. Age discrimination often forces many older New Yorkers into early retirement at a time when only half of America's aging population can afford to retire. In addition to financial strain, ageism can lead to significant declines in mental and physical health resulting in shorter life spans. Older women, in particular, can experience an increase in depressive symptoms as they often must contend with both sexism and ageism in the workplace.

This year, Council Member Chin, who also serves as the Co-Chair of the Women's Caucus, joined her colleagues on a letter supporting NY1 anchorwomen Roma Torre, Jeanine Ramirez, Kristen Shaughnessy, Vivian Lee and Amand Farincacci on their lawsuit alleging age and gender discrimination by their employer Charter Communications. The mistreatment these world-class journalists experienced exemplifies the urgent need to dismantle a toxic culture that devalues and isolates older employees.

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