

# **Grant Traffic Enforcement Agents & Officers “Peace Officer” Title**

## **Key Messaging and FAQs**

The proposed bill would amend the criminal procedure law to grant Peace Officer status to Traffic Enforcement Agents and Officers in New York City.

### **The Facts**

- There are approximately 3,000 Traffic Enforcements Agents and Officers in New York City, responsible for retrieving stolen cars, responding to auto accidents, enforcing block-the-box regulations, and directing traffic.
- They are often used as force multipliers at major events like parades and protests.
- Furthermore, they are frequently utilized by the NYPD as first responders to building collapses and other emergencies like Hurricane Sandy. When crises occur, these agents are on the front lines, doing all manner of out-of-title work.
- They work around the clock in bitter cold, searing heat, and inclement weather.
- They are a source of considerable revenue to city coffers.

In the course of these duties, Traffic Enforcement Agents and Officers are regularly attacked, assaulted, and verbally abused.

Despite these known dangers, they do not have the same protections as police—or any other Peace Officers—leaving them very little recourse to hold those who assault them accountable.

By establishing “Peace Officer” status to Traffic Enforcement Agents and Officers, this bill will set minimum felony charges of 3.5 years for individuals charged for assaulting an agent or officer.

There are 84 Peace Officer titles in the New York State. Less dangerous occupations that enjoy Peace Officer Status include Arcadia Dog Control Officers, Snug Harbor Park Ranger, Suffolk Weights and Measures agents, and so on.

## **FAQs**

### **Don’t “Peace Officers” usually carry firearms?**

The agents are NOT seeking guns. The new title would simply serve as an acknowledgement of the dangerous work they do. There are 84 Peace Officer titles in the state, about a third of which do not carry any firearms.

**What about concerns about criminal justice reform?**

It's important to remember that an overwhelming majority of Traffic Enforcements Agents and Officers are people of color, a large percentage of which are women of color. Additionally, these assaults are rarely if ever prosecuted. Ultimately, a change to "Peace Officer" status would grant some well-earned dignity to a difficult job.

**Does the bill have support?**

In the Assembly, Alicia Hyndman, member of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislative Caucus, agreed to be the prime sponsor. In the Senate, Andrew Gounardes, Chairman of the Civil Service and Pensions Committee and member of the Codes Committee, agreed to be the prime sponsor.