# LOCAL LAWS
# OF
# THE CITY OF NEW YORK
# FOR THE YEAR 2026

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## No. 149

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Introduced by Council Members Hanks, Joseph, Narcisse, Ossé, Brooks-Powers, Williams, Restler, Stevens, Louis, Farías, Hanif, Krishnan, De La Rosa, Banks, Wong, Marte, Nurse, Hankerson, Salaam, Ung, Cabán, J. Sanchez, Brewer, Epstein, P. Sanchez, Avilés, Aldebol, Won, Zhuang, Encarnación, Hudson, Dinowitz, Gennaro, Morano, and the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams).

## A LOCAL LAW

**To amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to a report and map of historical African American burial sites**

*Be it enacted by the Council as follows:*

Section 1. Chapter 2 of title 23 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 23-203 to read as follows:

*§ 23-203 Historical African American burial site report and map. a. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:*

*Appropriate means of acknowledging or commemorating. The term "appropriate means of acknowledging or commemorating" means a method, mode, measure, or other means that is reasonably suited to honor, remember, or explain the significance of a person, group, event, place, or other occurrence, having regard to its nature, context, and public importance, and the need for dignity, accuracy, accessibility, and proportionality.*

*Appropriate source of burial site information. The term "appropriate source of burial site information" means a source of information reasonably relied upon by professionals in archaeology, history, historic preservation, cemetery administration, genealogy, or a related field*

*to identify, evaluate, or determine the actual or probable existence, location, boundaries, age, or cultural affiliation of a burial site including, but not limited to, archival records or historical documents, cemetery or property records, historical maps, academic research, archaeological evidence, or oral histories.*

*Burial site. The term "burial site" means a location in the city used as a cemetery, graveyard, burial ground, gravesite, or other place of human interment, whether active, preserved or obliterated, and whether marked or unmarked.*

*Commissioner. The term "commissioner" means the commissioner of records and information services.*

*Department. The term "department" means the department of records and information services.*

*Historical African American burial site. The term "historical African American burial site" means a burial site that is associated with a formerly enslaved person or a historically African American community.*

*Preserve. The term "preserve" means to protect, maintain, stabilize, conserve, or rehabilitate a historic site, building, structure, object, or cultural resource in a manner that retains its historic significance.*

*Structure. The term "structure" has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision b of section 854 of the charter.*

*Works of art. The term "works of art" has the same meaning as set forth in subdivision a of section 854 of the charter.*

*b. Historical African American burial site report. No later than March 1, 2028, the commissioner, in consultation with the commissioners of parks and recreation, cultural affairs,*

*and information technology and telecommunications, the chair of the landmarks preservation commission, and the head of any other office or agency the commissioner deems relevant, shall submit to the mayor and the speaker of the council and post on the website of the department a report on historical African American burial sites. In developing such report, the commissioner shall consult existing scholarship or research, to the extent practicable, and shall consider appropriate sources of burial site information or consult professionals with expertise regarding historical African American burial sites. Such report shall include:*

*1. A list of historical African American burial sites;*

*2. A plan to identify additional historical African American burial sites, provided that such plan shall require verification using at least 1 appropriate source of burial site information for any such burial site identified;*

*3. For each historical African American burial site on the list required by paragraph 1 of this subdivision:*

*(a) A description of any historical significance of such burial site;*

*(b) A description of the physical condition of such burial site, including whether such burial site is active, preserved, neglected, or obliterated;*

*(c) Whether such burial site is located on property owned by the city, and if so, the agency that has jurisdiction over such property; and*

*(d) Whether such burial site is located on private property, and if so, the person that owns such property;*

*4. Recommendations regarding appropriate means of acknowledging and commemorating burial sites on the list required by paragraph 1 of this subdivision, including but not limited to,*

*whether a work of art or structure placed at or adjacent to such a burial site would be an appropriate means of acknowledging and commemorating such burial site; and*

*5. Recommendations regarding potential resources or support, including from state or federal historic preservation programs, to identify or preserve historical African American burial sites.*

*c. Community notice. 1. The commissioner shall provide a copy of the report required by subdivision b of this section to each community board and borough president.*

*2. No later than 30 days after the commissioner adds a historical African American burial site to the list and interactive map as required by paragraph 3 of subdivision e of this section, the commissioner shall provide notice to the community board and the council member of the district in which such burial site is located, and to the borough president of the borough in which such burial site is located.*

*d. Educational materials. The commissioner shall develop and make available to the public educational materials about the historical African American burial sites included on the list required by paragraph 1 of subdivision b of this section.*

*e. Interactive map of historical African American burial sites. 1. No later than March 1, 2028, the commissioner shall post on the website of the department:*

*(a) A copy of the list of historical African American burial sites required by paragraph 1 of subdivision b of this section; and*

*(b) An interactive map showing the location of each such burial site.*

*2. Such map shall provide information, including, but not limited to, the information required by paragraph 3 of subdivision b of this section, about each burial site included on such map. Such map shall be searchable by address and by borough.*

*3. Following the initial posting of such list and map, no later than 30 days after the commissioner becomes aware of a historical African American burial site, the commissioner shall update such list and such map to add such burial site to such list and map.*

*4. Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the contrary, the commissioner shall not include any historical African American burial site on the list and interactive map required by this subdivision where the commissioner determines that inclusion of such burial site on such list or map would create a risk of vandalism or looting of such burial site, provided that the commissioner shall provide the information required by paragraph 3 of subdivision b of this section for such burial site to the speaker of the council, the council member of the district in which such burial site is located, and the borough president of the borough in which such burial site is located.*

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK, OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK, s.s.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a local law of The City of New York, passed by the Council on September 10, 2026 and returned unsigned by the Mayor on October 13, 2026.

MICHAEL M. McSWEENEY, City Clerk, Clerk of the Council.

CERTIFICATION OF CORPORATION COUNSEL

I hereby certify that the form of the enclosed local law (Local Law No. 149 of 2026, Council Int. No. 220-A of 2026) to be filed with the Secretary of State contains the correct text of the local law passed by the New York City Council, presented to the Mayor, and neither approved nor disapproved within thirty days thereafter.

BRENDA COOKE, Acting Corporation Counsel.