



Shahana Hanif

CITY COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT 39

Subject Line: RELEASE: Council Member Hanif's Access to IDNYC Act Passes, Simplifying the Process to Obtain the Municipal ID

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City Council Passes Hanif's Access to IDNYC Act

Legislation would improve the program by reintroducing walk-in appointments, codifying a streamlined appointment scheduling system, adding training for staff, implementing a denial review process, and adding an issue date to the card

New York, NY | Today, the City Council voted to pass Council Member Shahana Hanif's [Intro 216-A, the Access to IDNYC Act](#). The bill, developed in collaboration with advocates and direct-service organizations, will streamline processes to enhance the IDNYC program operations with key reforms, including:

- Reinstating same-day walk-in appointments on a pilot basis
- Ensuring the number of available application slots meets demand from New Yorkers
- Codifying improvements to the online appointment scheduling system
- Implementing annual staff training for efficient processes
- Establishing a review system for applicants who are denied
- Adding an issue date to the card

The Access to IDNYC Act, which was co-authored by Deputy Speaker Diana Ayala and Council Member Gale Brewer, was voted on at today's [City Council's Stated Meeting](#) and was approved by a vote of 39 to 7.

Yesterday, Council Member Shahana Hanif hosted a press conference in front of the Central Brooklyn Public Library Branch, one of the program's 11 enrollment sites across New York City, where former Mayor Bill DeBlasio announced the launch of the IDNYC program back in 2014. Brooklyn Defender Services and the New York Immigration Coalition joined Hanif to support the passage of the legislation. [See photos from the press conference here](#). Attribute to the Office of Council Member Shahana Hanif.

Since its inception, the IDNYC program has issued [2.3 million cards to New Yorkers](#) aged 10 and older. The municipal identification card is available to all New York City residents, regardless of immigration status. This card can be used to access city services, enter city buildings, open bank accounts at many financial institutions, get discounted entry to cultural institutions, apply for work authorization, and apply for jobs (in conjunction with valid work authorization). The IDNYC has been particularly helpful for newly arrived immigrants who are establishing themselves in New York City.



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However, the program has faced some setbacks. For more than a year, same-day walk-in appointments [have not been made available](#) and the program website has a [difficult interface](#) that makes scheduling appointments challenging. These barriers make applying for IDNYC needlessly challenging at a time when [demand for the card is historically high](#). The Access to IDNYC Act will address these issues and make getting municipal identification simpler than ever.

Under new Trump Administration policies, the U.S. State Department is now only issuing passports with a male or female sex marker that marks the applicant's assigned sex at birth. In contrast, the IDNYC allows applicants to choose a gender marker- M, F, X, or “Not Designated” that best reflects their identity.

Ten years ago, former Mayor Bill DeBlasio and the City Council launched this groundbreaking initiative, celebrating how the program filled long-standing gaps in our communities. Today, with the Access to IDNYC Act, we are ensuring that those who need this resource can obtain it without delay.

“IDNYC is one of our City’s greatest achievements, addressing long-standing gaps within our communities. A decade later, with my bill, the Access to IDNYC Act (Intro 216A), we are ensuring that those who need this resource can obtain it without delay,” **said Council Member Shahana Hanif**. “The Access to IDNYC Act guarantees dignity for every New Yorker, especially as federal policies target our transgender, non-binary, and immigrant communities. I’m proud to have championed this effort and am grateful to the advocates, especially Brooklyn Defender Services, who worked hand in hand with me throughout the legislative process.”

“It’s crucial that New Yorkers can receive access to appropriate legal identification—now more than ever,” **said Council Member Alexa Avilés, Chair of the Committee on Immigration**. “While working people are bearing the burden of our current political environment, we should be eliminating the hurdles that may prevent access to public services. That’s why I’m honored to support Council Member Hanif as the Access to IDNYC Act advances through the City Council. It’s time to expand opportunities for New Yorkers to get IDNYC so that we might improve the livelihoods of working-class New Yorkers.”

“Helping to create the IDNYC program is one of my career highlights, and I’m extremely grateful to Council Member Hanif for championing this critical legislation to strengthen this critical program at this critical moment,” **said Council Member Lincoln Restler, Chair of the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation**. “Improving IDNYC sends a clear message that immigrants are welcome here!”

“New Yorkers require photo identification to access public benefits, employment, healthcare, and other things they need to survive. For the last decade, the IDNYC program has played a critical role in giving more New Yorkers access to a photo ID, but delays and barriers to IDNYC access



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can have tremendous consequences, such as deepening housing instability or food insecurity,” **said Kathleen McKenna, Senior Policy Social Worker at Brooklyn Defender Services.** “We thank Council Member Hanif for her support of the Access to IDNYC Bill to help break down these barriers and ensure even more New Yorkers can have access to IDNYC.”

“Since 2015, IDNYC has been a critical program and card for over 1.2 million New Yorkers, ensuring access to government buildings, schools, hospitals, bank accounts, and so much more,” **said Murad Awawdeh, President and CEO, New York Immigration Coalition.** “Now more than ever, as immigrant communities continue to be attacked by our nation’s highest office, we must do everything to ensure that all New York City residents are able to more easily attain the identification needed to engage in civic life and build stable lives for their families. IDNYC has been a lifeline for integration and inclusion for many immigrant New Yorkers, and Intro 216-A will ensure its continued success. We are grateful to Council Member Shahana Hanif and the City Council for introducing legislation to expand the IDNYC’s reach and look forward to working together to ensure its long-term success.”

“Intro 216-A, introduced by Council Member Hanif, is crucial for the Asian community as many immigrants rely on the IDNYC program to obtain a valid form of identification,” **said Joo Han and Andrew Sta. Ana, Co-Interim Executive Directors of Asian American Federation.** “Without a valid form of identification, many immigrants find it difficult to obtain jobs, open bank accounts, and access other city benefits available to them. Furthermore, through the critical work done by the Asian American Federation’s Small Business team, we understand the vital role valid identification has in improving the quality of life for small business owners and service industry workers. Providing in-person appointments that meet the ever-increasing demand for IDNYC and allowing same-day and walk-in appointments would especially benefit immigrants who have limited flexibility and predictability in their work schedules.”

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[About Council Member Shahana Hanif:](#) Council Member Shahana Hanif represents Brooklyn’s 39th District and is Co-Chair of the New York City Council’s Progressive Caucus and the Council’s Task Force to Combat Hate. Born and raised in the 39th District to Bangladeshi immigrant parents, Council Member Hanif has dedicated her career to advocating for working-class families and advancing a city built on care, equity, and safety. Since her election in 2021, Council Member Hanif has passed significant legislation, including [Local Law 85 \(2023\)](#), which mandates universal residential composting; [Local Laws 75 and 76 \(2022\)](#), which protect and expand abortion rights in NYC; and [Local Law 161 \(2023\)](#), which created a pioneering Immigrant Workers Bill of Rights. She also enacted [Local Law 45 \(2024\)](#), providing survivors of domestic violence with free lock changes, personal safety alarms, and door and window repairs. Council Member Hanif is the first Muslim woman ever elected to the New York City Council and the first woman to represent the 39th District in the New York City Council.