

Commentary/Op-Ed - February 2023

How to help New Yorkers by reducing red tape for nonprofits

In this NY Nonprofit Media op-ed, CUF's Jonathan Bowles and Brooklyn Community Foundation's Jocelynne Rainey urge city and state policymakers to help strengthen and stabilize the financially vulnerable nonprofit sector by reducing the unnecessary administrative burdens that government agencies impose on nonprofits.

Jonathan Bowles and Jocelynne Rainey

Last year, city leaders finally began to take meaningful steps to improve the deeply flawed contracting process for New York's human services nonprofits. But there is another important way city and state policymakers can help strengthen and stabilize the financially vulnerable nonprofit sector: by reducing the unnecessary administrative burdens that government agencies impose on nonprofits. These unnecessarily complicated processes take hundreds of thousands of hours to perform annually and likely cost taxpayers millions of dollars. There are a handful of egregiously burdensome requirements in the city contracting process which could be eliminated or reduced without comprising accountability, and making these changes would have little or no impact on the city's budget.

In this op-ed, CUF's Jonathan Bowles and Brooklyn Community Foundation's Jocelynne Rainey highlight four steps that Mayor Adams and the City Council should commit to in order to reform at least a half dozen of the most maddening contracting requirements by the end of 2023: ensure all agencies are using the same procurement platform; eliminate duplicative, manual submission processes; reduce the number of annual audits; and simplify and standardize discretionary funding from the City Council.

Read the full op-ed here.

This op-ed builds on the Center's ongoing research on supporting and strengthening the human services sector, including reports *Strengthening NYC's Nonprofits by Reducing Administrative Burdens*, *How NYC Can Leverage Data To Strengthen Social Services*, and *New York's Safety Net in Jeopardy*, and policy forum, "Strengthening NYC's Human Services Nonprofits by Reducing Their Administrative Burden."



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