

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND BRIGHTON BEACH
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT KICK OFF THE FIRST OF DCA'S 2016 BUSINESS
EDUCATION DAYS IN BRIGHTON BEACH**

Inspectors Issue Advice, Not Violations, to Local Businesses

BROOKLYN – Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) First Deputy Commissioner Alba Pico, Brighton Beach Business Improvement District (BID) Executive Director Yelena Makhnin, staff from the office of Council Member Deutsch, NYC Small Business Services and NYC Department of Sanitation visited more than 100 businesses in the Brighton Beach community of Brooklyn as part of DCA's 2016 Business Education Day series to educate businesses about key consumer protection laws and licensing requirements. DCA also shared information about the City's Paid Sick Leave and Commuter Benefits laws.

"Business education is a key strategy in the City's Small Business First reforms," said **DCA First Deputy Commissioner Alba Pico**. "By educating businesses, especially small businesses in immigrant communities, we can ensure they're compliant with the City's strong consumer protection laws, licensing laws, and labor-related laws. We're thrilled to be able to carry out the first of many more business education days this year."

"Many of our small businesses are owned and operated by immigrant entrepreneurs who have pursued the American Dream and developed their establishments into mainstays in our community," said **Councilman Chaim Deutsch**. "Today's Business Education Day in Brighton Beach was an important step towards educating and assisting business owners, by not allowing a language barrier to result in any petty fines or violations. DCA has committed to being more business friendly, and my goal is to ensure that our local businesses and Business Improvement Districts thrive and succeed. I thank Deputy Commissioner Alba Pico for attending today's tour, as well as Yelena Makhnin of the Brighton Beach BID."

"Thousands of immigrants came to New York to start a new life. Many decided to open businesses. It was not easy from the beginning – new country, new language and new rules. Today is not only an education walk, today is a day when the City and its agencies really show respect for hardworking business owners. On behalf of the business community of Brighton Beach, I applaud the Department of Consumer Affairs and Councilman Deutsch for organizing this event and I look forward to working together to make our great city the most business friendly city in the world," said **Yelena Makhin, Executive Director of the Brighton Beach Business Improvement District**.

"Compliance with New York City laws often presents a challenge for small business owners who are constantly focused on operating their company," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**. "Business Education Day offers these small business owners a valuable opportunity to learn about the regulations and achieve compliance, avoiding fines as well as creating a better experience for consumers."

"SBS is committed to ensuring that every small business owner can access the resources they need to thrive in New York City, and we are proud to partner with sister agencies like DCA on initiatives that bring these powerful tools straight to their doorsteps," said **Small Business Services Commissioner Gregg Bishop**. "Through Mayor de Blasio's Small Business First plan, not only are we proactively educating

business owners about navigating and complying with City regulations – we are also sharing vital information about the services we provide to help businesses open, operate and expand.”

“I’m pleased that the Department of Sanitation has teamed up with Consumer Affairs, the Brighton Beach BID, and elected officials to inform local businesses what is expected of them in keeping our neighborhood clean, healthy, and safe,” said **Sanitation Commissioner Kathryn Garcia**. “Local businesses’ compliance with Sanitation rules and regulations creates a partnership between the Department and merchants who can avoid summonses and fines simply by keeping their storefronts clear of debris and litter. It is a win-win for all – customers are more likely to patronize businesses who keep communities clean.”

“Small businesses are the lifeblood of our communities, so we must do everything we can to assist and empower them and ensure they are knowledgeable about all of the city’s laws and regulations. Fines and violations can be crippling to businesses, and the Department of Consumer Affairs’ Business Education Day series is a terrific grassroots approach to reach business owners – particularly in diverse neighborhoods like Brighton Beach – and make sure they are compliant. I want to thank DCA, and I look forward to partnering with them on similar events across Brooklyn,” said **Carlo A. Scissura, President and CEO of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce**.

This was the first of DCA’s 2016 Business Education Day series, which is part of the City’s Small Business First initiative to expand education of small businesses. Teams visited more than 100 businesses in Brighton Beach and distributed relevant compliance materials in multiple languages including DCA’s easy-to-read [Inspection Checklists](#) to provide businesses with a detailed list of what DCA inspectors look for during an inspection. Putting these checklists directly into the hands of business owners will enable them to know exactly how to comply with laws and rules before they are visited by an inspector – this means fewer violations and fewer fines. In addition to increased business education, the Small Business First initiative also includes key reforms that have helped reduce the number and cost of fines for small businesses, and increased transparency, allowing business owners to have inspections conducted in their language of choice.

Inspectors also distributed [10 Things Every Business Should Know](#) guides, materials explaining businesses’ responsibilities regarding the City’s [Paid Sick Leave](#) and [Commuter Benefits](#) laws. DCA informed businesses about the City’s [air conditioning laws](#) and encouraged them to use DCA’s live chat option, where they can easily ask questions Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. without having to visit DCA’s Licensing Center or take time away from their customers to call in a question.

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) licenses, inspects, and educates businesses, assists and informs consumers, mediates complaints, and offers free financial counseling and safe banking products. DCA enforces the Consumer Protection Law, the Paid Sick Leave Law and other related business laws throughout New York City and licenses nearly 80,000 businesses in 55 different industries. For more information, call 311 or visit DCA online at nyc.gov/consumers or on its social media sites, [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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