



OFFICE OF FAITH & NON-PROFIT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

March 2024 Newsletter

Greetings and welcome to our first newsletter. As we start the third month of 2024, we wanted to reach out to the entire Interfaith Community to remind you we are here for you. Please use this newsletter for information on upcoming events, funding opportunities, and resources to ensure your organizations can thrive.

2024 State of the State Highlights



Governor Hochul is laser-focused on protecting all New Yorkers. With the disturbing rise in hate crimes in recent years, she is committed to doing everything in her power to protect our faith communities.

Her work includes:

- Proposing legislation to expand the list of offenses eligible for prosecution as hate crimes, including graffiti, arson, gang assault, and criminal possession of a weapon;
- Providing additional funding for the Securing Communities Against Hate initiative, for a combined \$60 million over the next two years, allowing organizations to request up to \$200,000 each for security and cybersecurity; and
- Investing \$5 million in the Office of Faith and Non-Profit Development Services to facilitate grantmaking for affordable housing, hate crime prevention, addressing maternal mortality, mental health care, and improving college affordability.



Security Update

Governor Hochul has taken several actions to prevent hate crimes, promote tolerance, and improve the safety and security of New Yorkers. The New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) administers the Securing Communities Against Hate Crimes program which provides grants to nonprofit organizations at risk of hate crimes or attacks because of their ideology, beliefs, or missions.

This funding allows community-based organizations to secure their facilities and better protect individuals and families they serve. Grants can fund interior or exterior security improvements, such as alarms, panic buttons, fences, shatter-resistant glass and public address systems, among other items. Funds also may be used to cover costs associated with security training and enhance an organization's cybersecurity.

The deadline for [applications](#) and vulnerability self-assessments is **Friday, May 17, 2024 at noon.**

Executive Committee Spotlight

Meet the President of the New York State Interfaith Council's Executive Committee, Reverend A.R. Bernard. He is a visionary pastor, leading one of our state's largest houses of worship, Christian Cultural Center.



Q: *What led you to become a faith based leader?*

A: A strong desire and sense of calling, to help people discover purpose and meaning in the context of faith.

Q: *Looking ahead, what are your aspirations for the interfaith community in New York State, and how do you see the Executive Committee contributing to the realization of these goals?*

A: To create a national model for interfaith dialogue, cooperation and strategic partnership with government. The Executive Committee, which is a diverse representation of faiths from across the state of New York, can be a focus group for government and a vehicle to facilitate dialogue and cooperation amongst clergy.

Q: *Are you focused on any particular issue area right now?*

A: Affordable Housing.

Q: *What are you most proud of in terms of the work you and your organization have done?*

A: Modeling successful engagement of theological ideas, ethics, and practices with the broader public sphere and societal issues.

Recent Highlights



Governor Hochul visits and delivers remarks at Convent Avenue and New Mount Zion Baptist Churches.



Governor Hochul visits and hears from Executive Committee members at the Islamic Center of Melville.



Governor Hochul delivers remarks at Temple Beth-El's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Erev Shabbat service.



Director Caura Washington meets with Executive Committee member Dr. Kia Brooks and Nichole Christian.



Governor Hochul hosts Sheikh Musa Drammeh and other faith leaders to deploy resources to combat online hate.



Upcoming Events

Does your organization have public events coming up? Fill out [THIS FORM](#) to have it included in our next newsletter.

We are going on tour! We will be in Westchester, Richmond, Albany, and the Bronx in the coming months. Details to come. We look forward to connecting!

Connect with us!

Do you have any employees, recent initiatives, or content you want included in our next newsletter? Fill out [THIS FORM](#).

Please fill out [THIS FORM](#) to be added to our database of faith leaders.



Important Interfaith Dates This Month

Ramadan: March 10-April 9

Purim: March 23-March 24

Holi: March 25

Easter: March 31