



Mayor Adams Makes Major Investments in Film and Television Industry

www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/531-22/mayor-adams-makes-major-investments-film-television-industry

July 21, 2022

Spotlight Initiative of Mayor Adams' Economic Recovery Blueprint, Plan Includes First-Ever Film and Television Industry Council

Appointment of New Deputy Commissioner for Film Office in Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment

Mayor Signs Executive Order 21, Requiring Each Agency to Have Film Office Liaison

NEW YORK— New York City Mayor Eric Adams today announced three key components of his “Rebuild, Renew, Reinvent” economic recovery blueprint that will drive inclusive growth in the film and television sector, invest in New York’s creative economy, and ensure the industry recovers beyond pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. These components include the introduction of the first-ever Film and Television Production Industry Council, created to advise the city’s production policies and programs; the appointment of Kwame Amoaku as deputy commissioner in the Film Office of the Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment (MOME), to serve as principal advisor on production policy as film production in New York City returns to pre-pandemic levels; and the signing of Executive Order 21, highlighting the Adams administration’s support of the television and film industry.

“A strong foundation of production workers calls New York City home, but sadly many saw their jobs and their livelihoods suffer during COVID-19 — this administration is taking action to change that,” said **Mayor Adams**. “We vowed to help the film and television industry fully recover, and our new Film and Television Production Industry Council and the appointment of Kwame Amoaku as the new Deputy Film Commissioner make good on our promise. New York City has some amazing stories to tell, and we’re going to make it easy as possible for the film and television industry to tell each one of those stories.”

“New York City’s film and television industry supported over 185,000 local jobs and accounted for more than \$82 billion in total economic output before the pandemic,” said **Deputy Mayor for Economic and Workforce Development Maria Torres-Springer**. “The execution of these initiatives ensures this administration continues to equitably and effectively serve the needs of this industry and the greater city.”

“New York City’s film and television industry led the recovery of our creative economy, demonstrating its importance to our city’s cultural identity and vitality and drawing talent, businesses, and tourists from around the world,” said **MOME Commissioner Anne del Castillo**. “With the authority of Executive Order 21, the leadership of Deputy Film Commissioner Kwame Amoaku, and the support of the industry council, we can advance a holistic and coordinated approach to strengthen and diversify the industry in New York City.”

“I would like to thank Mayor Adams and Commissioner del Castillo for the opportunity to serve the film community in this incredible city,” said **MOME Film Office Deputy Commissioner Kwame Amoaku**. “I look forward to being a part of the awesome economic force that film production represents, for not only the studios and networks that make quality content here but also the residents and businesses of New York.”

The Film and Television Production Industry Council will be co-chaired by Directors Guild of America (DGA) Eastern Executive Director Neil Dudich and Executive Producer and New York Producers COVID Response Alliance Co-Chair April Taylor. The council will advise the city’s production policies and programs and include the following 21 members:

- **Venus Anderson** – Program Director, ‘Made in NY’ Production Assistant Training Program at Brooklyn Workforce Innovations
- **Gina Argento** – President and CEO, Broadway Stages
- **Kathy Banuelos** – Senior Vice President, State Government Affairs, Motion Picture Association (MPA)
- **Rebecca Damon** – Executive Director, New York Local, Labor Policy and International Affairs, Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA)
- **Ryan Ferguson** – Location Manager and DGA member
- **John Ford** – President and Business Manager, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) Local 52
- **Carolyn Gershenson** – Set Medic, IATSE Local 52 Officer
- **Malaika Johnson** – Location Scout, Teamsters Local 817 member
- **Ezra Knight** – New York President, SAG-AFTRA
- **Dede Lea** – Executive Vice President, Global Public Policy and Government Relations, Paramount
- **Amy Lemisch** – Director, Studio Affairs, Netflix
- **Matt Miller** – President and CEO, Association of Independent Commercial Producers
- **Flo Mitchell Brown** – Chairperson, New York Production Alliance
- **Tommy O’Donnell** – President, Teamsters Local 817
- **Santiago Quinones** – Producer, DGA member
- **Jay Roewe** – Senior Vice President, Production, HBO
- **Hal Rosenbluth** – President, Kaufman Astoria Studios
- **Doug Steiner** – Chairman, Steiner Studios
- **Vans Stevenson** – Senior Advisor, Global Government Affairs, MPA

- **Veronica Sullivan** – Senior Vice President and Head of Global Production, External Affairs and State and Local Government, NBCUniversal
- **Canella Williams-Larrabee** – Unit Production Manager, DGA member

“It is an honor to be asked to help lead a group of distinguished film, television, and commercial industry veterans to advise Mayor Eric Adams on policy recommendations which will reinforce New York City’s place as a top production destination in the world,” said **Neil J. Dudich, eastern executive director, DGA**. “We thank Mayor Adams for his commitment to working New Yorkers and the arts and for recognizing the film, television, and commercial industries as a key driver of economic growth and a provider of high-quality union jobs with outstanding compensation and benefits.”

“I am grateful and honored to be co-chair, along with the esteemed Neil Dudich of the DGA, on this advisory committee. I commend Mayor Adams and his administration for convening such an advisory committee for the film and television industry comprised of local members of the production community, whose boots are on the ground and who are professionally and personally invested in the long-term success of the industry and this city,” said **April Taylor, executive producer, co-chair, New York Producers COVID Response Alliance**. “We look forward to listening and learning from each other as we create growth and opportunity for the individuals and economy of New York City while ensuring the world at large continues to see New York on the big and small screens as the vibrant and special place it truly is.”

Most recently, film and television industry veteran Kwame Amoaku served as director of Chicago’s Film Office. Amoaku will promote New York City as a premier location for production, develop and maintain relationships with key industry stakeholders, and oversee the film permitting process. Amoaku’s career in film and television spans 30 years and includes experience in directing, producing, writing, cinematography, acting, and location management. As director of the Chicago Film Office, he helped develop COVID-19 protocols that allowed filming permits to be issued by June 2020 and served as part of the city’s COVID Recovery Task Force, which invested in workforce development and infrastructure to increase sound stage capacity and revenues by 25 percent and film production by 125 percent. Amoaku also designed and implemented a workforce development program for Chicago residents from underserved areas and created the Chicago Independent Producers Lab to provide professional development and support to Chicago’s independent film community.

Finally, the administration additionally announced the issuance of Executive Order 21, requiring each city agency to have a film office liaison to support the \$82 billion economic impact in the city and the 185,000 jobs the industry supports and contributes to the cultural identity of New York City. This will facilitate on-location production across the five boroughs, which, in turn, supports industry growth, connects New Yorkers to jobs in this growing sector, and strengthens local small businesses.

Today's announcements speak to the Adams administration's ongoing commitment to invest in studio and sound stage facilities across the city and support the ongoing demand for production space. Currently, nearly 1 million square feet of production and related space is being newly built or renovated throughout the five boroughs, including at the 'Made In NY' Campus at Bush Terminal in Brooklyn. The growing demand for content — sparked by the increase in streaming platforms — has led the number of productions in New York City to reach all-time highs, both pre- and post-pandemic, with 35 productions filming on the ground at any given time and 80 series shooting in the city — a 34 percent increase in episodic production since 2014.

###

Media Contact

pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov
(212) 788-2958