



# ISSUES FACING NEW YORK CITY'S AGENCIES: NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION

## Overview

The New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) is the largest sanitation department in the world, with a Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget of \$1.9 billion and approximately 7,800 uniformed and 2,000 civilian employees. DSNY provides recycling and waste collection, street and vacant lot cleaning, and ice and snow removal services on approximately 6,300 miles of City streets. The Department operates 59 district garages and a large fleet including about 2,000 collection trucks, 150 dump trucks, 450 mechanical brooms and 700 salt spreaders, among other equipment. DSNY also enforces cleaning laws and issues notices of violation for a variety of sanitation infractions.

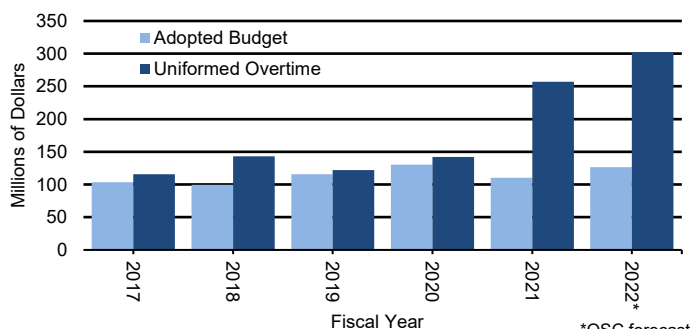
## Pandemic Impact on Agency Operations

The DSNY experienced a surge in medical leave during the first few weeks of the pandemic and has continued to experience spikes in employee unavailability. This factor, coupled with a FY 2021 hiring freeze which reduced uniformed staff by 9 percent (nearly 700 employees) between February 2020 and June 2021, has resulted in higher overtime costs. Several services were initially reduced or suspended because of pandemic-related budget cuts, but most funding has been restored. Simultaneously, the Department managed the GetFoodNYC Emergency Home Food Delivery Program, distributing nearly 130 million meals to City residents from March 2020 through September 2021. The program ended October 1, 2021, but deliveries ran through November 30, 2021.

## ISSUES FACING THE AGENCY

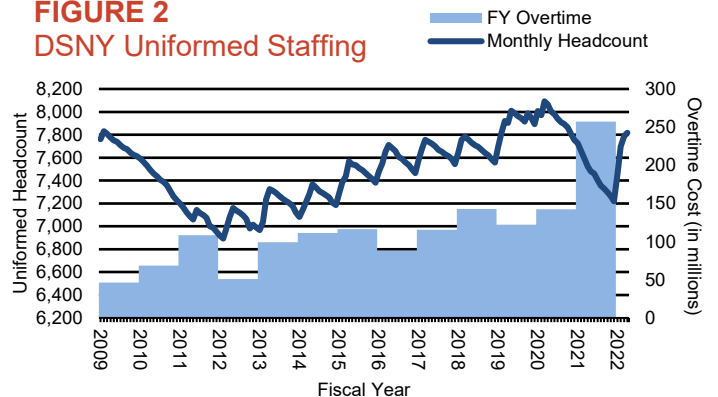
- Uniformed Overtime:** Uniformed overtime spending at the DSNY increased by more than 80 percent from FY 2020 to FY 2021, reaching the highest level on record (\$257 million), and is projected to cost about \$300 million in FY 2022 (see Figure 1). High employee unavailability due to medical leave continues to contribute to higher overtime, and there remains the potential for future COVID-19 variants to diminish the available work force, as seen with the Omicron variant.
- Staffing:** The DSNY typically hires uniformed personnel during the first few months of the fiscal year and allows attrition to reduce its staffing level over the course of the year (see Figure 2). A hiring freeze, like the one imposed on the Department in FY 2021, necessitates the use of additional overtime to mitigate the impact of vacant posts, especially as the workforce is already strained by the pandemic. The agency also attributed a decline in some non-refuse performance indicators to a redeployment of uniformed staff to handle refuse and recycling operations.

**FIGURE 1**  
DSNY Uniformed Overtime Expense



Sources: Office of Management and Budget; Financial Management System

**FIGURE 2**  
DSNY Uniformed Staffing



Sources: Office of Management and Budget; Financial Management System