RM&S Communication. Teamwork. Results.
One Commerce Plaza
Suite 402
Albany, NY 12210
Phone: 518.465.7330
Fax: 518.465.0273
Website: lobbywr.com
ROBERT REID | MARCY SAVAGE | KELLY FORSTER | KAYLA BOGDANOWICZ | ELIZABETH REID | MAGGIE SHUGRUE

RMS End of Week Update 9/11/2026

Thousands of drones recreated the silhouette of the Twin Towers over New York Harbor on Sept. 9, 2026, during "2,977 Lights Over New York Harbor," a tribute honoring the 2,977 people killed in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Provided By Sky Elements

25th Anniversary of 9/11

Today, Governor Hochul honored 9/11 victims, survivors and first responders on the 25th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks. In remembrance of those who lost their lives 25 years ago, including 84 employees of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and 40 state employees from the Department of Taxation and Finance, Governor Hochul has directed 17 landmarks across New York State to be illuminated red, white, and blue and directed flags, including the 9/11 Memorial Flag at the State

Capitol and Empire State Plaza, to be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset today, September 11.

Governor Hochul also released a video commemorating the 25th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks and the resilience of the city in the aftermath of tragedy. The video is narrated by actor and former New York City Fire Department firefighter Steve Buscemi, who returned to service alongside his fellow firefighters in the days following the attacks.

“What began as a beautiful morning 25 years ago gave way to an unfathomable tragedy. New York will never forget those we lost, those who lived, and the families that were left behind,” Governor Hochul said. “Today, we honor their memory and the courage of a city that held strong in the face of immense tragedy.”

Earlier this week, Governor Hochul visited firefighters at FDNY Engine 16, Ladder Company 7 to highlight an additional $2 million in funding for the Albert Einstein College of Medicine that will unlock early testing and care for thousands of our brave 9/11 first responders and announced $2.2 million to support expanded free admission to the 9/11 Memorial Museum for all New Yorkers every Sunday, year-round. Governor Hochul also signed legislation to provide support to 9/11 first responders and survivors that will ensure eligible New Yorkers receive the benefits they are entitled to under the law.

To view the full press release please click here.
9/11 Memorial Museum 25th Anniversary Information

Emergency Rule By DFS Regarding Implementing Changes Included In The State Budget to New York's Independent Dispute Resolution (IDR) Process
Linked here please find an Emergency Rule Making by the Department of Financial Services posted in this week's State Register implementing changes included in the State Budget to New York's Independent Dispute Resolution (IDR) process. The changes took effect on August 26 and apply to disputes submitted on or after that date.

The key changes include:

- Both parties must pay the IDR process fee before a dispute can be reviewed, with exceptions for patient-initiated disputes.
- The response timeline includes a 15-business day deadline, followed by a five-business day period after a second request from the IDR entity.
- Failure to respond or pay the required fee can result in an automatic decision against the non-responsive party. For example, if a provider fails to provide requested information or pay its fee when the health plan is the applicant, the dispute will be decided in favor of the health plan, and vice versa.

- The IDR decision timeframe has been extended from 30 to 45 business days once the IDR entity has all information necessary to review the dispute.
- Process fees must generally be refunded to the prevailing party within 30 days of the determination.
- An application processing fee may be charged to a provider or health plan when a dispute is rejected or decided against the party because of a failure to provide information or pay the required process fee.
- There are also specific changes affecting disputes involving the Empire Plan and State Employee Health Plan which require that the IDR entity only consider the geozip where the provider rendered the service for purposes of determining the same geographical area's allowed benchmark and maximum fee.

This posting in the State Register serves as a notice of emergency adoption which will expire November 22, 2026. DFS intends to adopt this emergency rule as a permanent rule and will subsequently publish a notice of proposed rulemaking.

The full rulemaking is linked here.

AI Researcher Warns Companies Are Ignoring Catastrophic Risks

Concerns about the risks of artificial intelligence, and whether the companies building it are doing enough to keep it safe, have erupted across the tech world. Jacob Coxon, who previously worked at Anthropic and OpenAI, wrote that the industry understands the potential risks but is moving ahead anyway. According to Coxon "The people building A.I. earnestly believe that it could kill us all by the end of the decade. This is not a marketing stunt. If anything, many executives and senior researchers will couch their phrasing in the press to sound sensible. But I hear the same people express fear privately. No other human activity poses this level of danger."

Governor Hochul released the following statement on the issue,

“When the people building the world’s most powerful AI systems are sounding the alarm about potentially catastrophic risks, we have a responsibility to listen and act.

Artificial intelligence is here today, advancing at extraordinary speed, and the risks raised by leading researchers demand serious action from government. The Trump Administration has failed to meet this moment, advancing frameworks that lack critical transparency, public incident reporting and accountability.

Here in New York, we’ve stepped up, setting a national standard for transparency and accountability for frontier AI models. But states cannot solve this problem alone. The federal government must establish strong national standards that put public safety ahead of the race to develop ever more powerful technology.

We have a collective obligation to ensure technological progress does not come at our own peril. Washington must act now."

To view the full press release please click [here](#).
To view the full article please click [here](#).

Governor Hochul Announces New Regulation Proposed By The Department Of Financial Services Increasing Transparency For Policyholders In The Auto Insurance Market

This week, Governor Kathy Hochul announced that the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) has proposed a regulation amending the process for filing private passenger auto insurance rates, implementing reforms enacted in the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget to help bring down the cost of auto insurance in New York State. The regulation will increase transparency by requiring insurers to receive prior approval for any private passenger automobile rate increase requests. The enacted FY27 Budget delivers sweeping reforms to address key factors driving up auto insurance premiums, including insurance fraud and excessive litigation costs. The proposed regulation issued by DFS is an important step in enacting these reforms.

"New Yorkers deserve a transparent, fair and accountable auto insurance market that puts customers first," Governor Hochul said. "This regulation delivers on our commitment to strengthen consumer protections and give policyholders greater confidence that insurance companies are being held to clear standards. As we continue to work to lower costs, combat fraud and make New York State more affordable, we are helping families and businesses make informed decisions and ensuring insurers remain accountable to their customers."

New York State Department of Financial Services Acting Superintendent Kaitlin Asrow said, "This regulation strengthens transparency for New York policyholders by ensuring that any increase in private passenger auto rates is subject to comprehensive and independent review."

Assemblymember David Weprin said, "New Yorkers deserve relief from rising auto insurance costs, as well as greater transparency and accountability when rates change. Requiring insurers to receive prior approval before raising private passenger auto rates is an important consumer protection and a key part of the reforms we enacted in this year's State Budget. I commend Governor Hochul and the Department of Financial Services for moving swiftly to implement these measures, and I look forward to continuing our work to combat insurance fraud, reduce unnecessary costs and make auto insurance more affordable for New York drivers."

State Senator Jamaal T. Bailey said, "With rising costs impacting everyday budgets, it is essential we make sure that auto insurance remains as affordable as possible for New

York's hardworking families. I thank Governor Hochul and the Department of Financial Services for their decisive action to increase transparency and protect drivers from unwarranted rate hikes, bad actors, and financial hardship. As chair of the Senate Insurance Committee, I remain committed to working with both the Department and Governor Hochul to lower insurance costs and deliver meaningful financial relief for all New Yorkers."

The regulation published today implements new regulatory safeguards and transparency measures for drivers in New York. Currently, insurers may implement no more than two overall average private passenger auto rate increases without the Department's prior approval if the cumulative effect of the rate increases are within 5%. The proposed regulation requires insurers to seek express prior approval from DFS before *any* upward rate changes. Additionally, the regulation ensures insurers notify policyholders about rate decreases taken without prior approval resulting from Fiscal Year 2027 budget reforms and explain why the changes are happening.

A 60-day public comment period began upon the proposed regulation's publication in the State Register. The law and regulation will take effect on November 27, 2026.

Visit the DFS website to review the proposed regulation or submit feedback. To view the full press release please click here.

Helpful Links and Resources
2026 RMS HMH End of Session Update
RMS Revenue and Tax Final Budget Table
RMS Health/Mental Hygiene Final Budget Table
FY 2027 Enacted Budget Financial Plan
Empire State Development Tariff Resource Guide
NYS COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard
NYS COVID-19 Fatalities Tracker
Eliminating Distractions In Schools Resource
Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Financial Services information and resources
New York COVID-19 Vaccine Information Page
Department of Health
https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home
COVID-19 Guidance for Medicaid Providers
Office of Mental Health
https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/covid-19-resources.html
OPWDD
https://opwdd.ny.gov/coronavirus-guidance
State Education Department
http://www.op.nysed.gov/COVID-19.html

NYS Department of Labor
https://dol.ny.gov/