

New York City Paid a Record \$1.5 Billion in Legal Claims in 2022

Over \$681 million spent to resolve over 7,000 personal injury claims for motor vehicle accidents, defective sidewalks, and more. by Christopher Hazlehurst, J.D.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, May 19, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New York City's Comptroller issues an annual report describing legal claims brought against the City each year and how they were resolved. The Comptroller's report for fiscal year 2022 detailed more than 12,000 claims resolved for upwards of \$1.5 billion, the highest amount in the history of the City.

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*Kevin Jay Kohn, New York
Personal Injury Lawyer*

According to the Comptroller's [Annual Claims Report](#) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, New York City paid a total of \$1.5 billion in legal claims between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022. The Report detailed 12,188 claims involving torts, civil rights violations, and other legal harm claimed by individuals and businesses.

One of the City's main sources of liability involves personal injury and property damage claims (tort claims). According to the Report, New York paid more than \$688 million in tort claims in FY 2022, over \$100 million more than the City paid in FY 2021. The vast majority of those claims--more than 99 percent--involved personal injury.

The City paid out more than \$681 million in damages to resolve more than 7,000 claims involving medical malpractice, civil rights violations, traffic accidents, school incidents, correctional facility injuries, and other incidents of personal injury allegedly caused by the City's negligence. Most of the City's personal injury claims arose from injuries at correctional facilities and police actions, followed closely by motor vehicle accidents and civil rights claims.

Injuries caused by defective sidewalks were also among the most common claims. As New York personal injury attorney Kevin Kohn of The Bronx-based [Kohn Law Firm](#) explains, “Defective sidewalk claims are a source of significant liability for the City because the City takes responsibility for maintaining the sidewalks outside of most privately-owned family homes as well as sidewalks on City property.” Meanwhile, sidewalks abutting commercial property and

certain multi-family residences are the responsibility of the property owners. "It can sometimes require a complicated legal analysis to determine the proper party liable for a New York sidewalk slip and fall or trip and fall injury," Kohn adds.

The largest individual settlements, however, involved civil rights allegations. Eight of the 11 largest tort claims paid out by the City in FY 2022 concerned alleged wrongful convictions, while another of the largest settlements concerned an inmate at Rikers injured due to alleged negligence by Department of Corrections staff. A number of convictions were overturned in FY 2022 based on new testimony, DNA evidence, police misconduct, or prosecutorial misconduct. The largest wrongful conviction settlement of the year cost the City \$13 million to settle after the 25-year inmate provided evidence of an eyewitness identifying another culprit to the crime and of prosecutors mishandling the criminal proceedings.

The City also paid \$7.4 million in property damage claims. The majority of the property damage claims concerned motor vehicle accidents allegedly caused by the City's negligence. Seventy percent, or \$5.2 million, of the City's property damage liability arose from vehicle accidents. Other causes included damage caused by City personnel, water main and sewer damage, and police action.

Attorney Kohn explains that while holding the City liable for negligence can be more challenging than the standard personal injury claim, the Comptroller's report proves that government agencies can and should be held accountable for the damage they cause. Kohn recommends that anyone injured on City property or by a City employee contact a lawyer immediately because the time frame for pursuing a claim is much shorter.

"The statute of limitations for filing a personal injury lawsuit is three years from the date of injury," says Kohn, "but for suits against the government, you must file a Notice of Claim within 90 days of the accident." Kohn notes there are exceptions to the general rule, so one should always contact an attorney as soon as possible for advice on their specific situation.

FY 2022 was an outlier for the City's total liability. According to the Comptroller, the City pays on



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average around \$1 billion per year in legal claims. In FY 2022, however, the City settled a massive class action lawsuit to the tune of more than \$366 million in judgments.

The Gulino class action (Gulino, et al. v. Board of Education, case No. 96 Civ. 8414), originally filed close to 30 years ago, concerned allegations that the City's Department of Education and the New York State Education Department discriminated against Black and Latino teachers. According to the lawsuit, the state-mandated certification exam had a disparate impact on teachers from those communities. The City will ultimately owe close to \$1.35 billion, plus post-judgment interest, with \$366.8 million paid out in FY 2022.

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