



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on August 30, 2023

## White House and New York Trade Barbs Over Migrant Crisis

The migration issue, once a rallying point for Democrats during the Trump years, is now a source of division, as New York and the Biden administration trade friendly fire.

The White House this week shot back at jabs from New York state and New York City, which accuse the federal government of failing to adequately address the flux of migrants that has exceeded housing and work capacities.

In letters addressed to New York Gov. Kathy Hochul and New York Mayor Eric Adams, both Democrats, Joe Biden's Homeland Security Secretary, Alejandro Mayorkas, cited two dozen areas in which it says the city can improve its migrant operations to alleviate the crisis without the federal government's help.



Lukas Kloeppel/Pexels

In the letter obtained by [Politico](#), Mayorkas pointed to several structural and operational issues identified in the course of a week-long evaluation of New York City's migrant operations, which began on August 7.

"The structural issues include governance and organization of the migrant operations, including issues of authority, structure, personnel, and information flow," Mayorkas wrote to the officials. "The operational issues include the subjects of data collection, planning, case management, communications, and other aspects of day-to-day operations."

"We are hopeful that our recommendations will equip the city to take additional steps to improve the migrant operations and maximize the value of our continued partnership and your support," the homeland security secretary added.

A public official with knowledge of the recommendations told *Politico* that other suggestions included improving communication with migrants, bolstering the data-collection process, and giving migrants more information about applying for work authorization and asylum.

Both the governor and the mayor have taken aim at the administration. Last week Hochul made a public address in which she declared that the crisis "originated with the federal government, and it must be resolved with the federal government."

In both that address and an accompanying letter, Hochul urged the federal government to pick out sites of federally-owned land to be used as temporary shelters to help with the housing of the approximately 100,000 asylum-seeking migrants that have arrived in New York this year.

Adams lays the blame on the administration for failing to provide New York with sufficient money, and



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for being slow to grant work authorization for the migrants. According to the mayor, the \$135 million he has received from the federal government is not nearly enough to cover New York's many needs.

Mayorkas touched upon Hochul's concerns in his response letter, stating that the White House authorized the use of a hangar at John F. Kennedy Airport, as well as 11 federal sites across the state, for the housing of migrants.

"We look forward to hearing from the city and state on the viability of these sites," Mayorkas wrote to Hochul.

But Avi Small, a spokesperson for the governor, told *Politico* that many of the proposed sites are too far away from New York City.

"As Governor Hochul has repeatedly said, this crisis will only abate once the federal government takes action on work authorization and allows migrants to be resettled permanently, and we look forward to learning additional details from the Department of Homeland Security during today's briefing," said Small.

*Politico* further reported:

Among the requests include "a decompression strategy at the border," expedited work authorizations for asylum-seekers and the declaration of a state of emergency to get more federal aid to the city, which has spent \$1.7 billion on programs and services. The city said it has already opened more than 200 sites....

In regards to the calls by Hochul to "let them work," Mayorkas said his department is aware of the need to issue work authorization in a timely manner and is considering changes to make the process faster. But, he did note that there are statutory constraints that hinder these efforts.

A White House official who spoke on the condition of anonymity said a specific statutory constraint holding up the process is the 150-day waiting period required before asylum-seekers can apply for a work permit. That's along with an additional 30 days of waiting before they can receive an employment authorization document.

Nonetheless, Mayorkas assured Hochul that the administration is "exploring all options available" to speed up the work authorization process for the migrants.

The irony is that Democrats such as Hochul and Adams repeatedly boasted of their pro-migration stance. Now that they actually have to deal with the consequences of an open border, their tune has changed.

While it is true that the federal government is responsible for the crisis because of its lax border and migration enforcement policies, perhaps New York should nevertheless be left to deal with its migrant issue on its own — without the assistance of tax dollars from the citizens of other states. After all, they are getting exactly what they said they wanted.

To learn more about the immigration crisis and what can be done about it, [click here](#).



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