

# City to Slash Retirees' Health Benefits

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As we go to press, the [NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees](#) has announced that next week, legislation will be introduced in the City Council [stripping](#) retired City workers of their Medicare benefits. An amendment to the [Administrative Code \(12-126\)](#) will allow the City to put retirees in an as yet unspecified, for-profit Medicare Advantage plan while relieving the City of its legal obligation to provide Medigap insurance for those wishing to remain in traditional Medicare.

*(To take action, go to the end of this article.)*

Not only are over 250,000 retired workers impacted, but so are their immediate families. Another 330,000 current employees will be in the same situation when they retire. The move has been strongly criticized by Council Member Gale Brewer. ([Scroll down in her newsletter here.](#))

The [Amsterdam News](#) explained how higher-paid retirees with larger pensions will be able to remain in traditional Medicare by [paying for their own Medigap insurance](#). Those with smaller pensions will have no choice but to accept an inferior plan with long waits for preapproval of life-saving tests and procedures, and often denial of care. The new plan replaces an equitable system for all City workers with a two-tiered system. Often, those in the lower tier will be people of color. Many studies, including one by [the Inspector General of the US Department of Health and Human Services](#) show that for-profit Medicare Advantage Plans offer inferior care.

Although the City, allied with the municipal unions, claims that it will save money by switching to an inferior Medicare Advantage plan subsidized by the Federal Government, this is not what was promised to City workers. They worked for substantially less money in their paychecks in return for guaranteed quality health care at no additional cost to themselves. That promise included a choice of medical plans including traditional Medicare, with the City providing Medigap insurance for the 20% of health costs not covered by Medicare.

The City first tried to make the change administratively, but was sued by the NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees. [The City lost its case.](#) Both the State Supreme Court and the Appeals Court ruled that the proposed plan violated the City's Administrative Code. The City is now trying to change the Code itself (12-126.)

**To take action:**

- [Do this now.](#) Alert from the NYC Organization of Public Service Retirees.
- Sign a petition at [Change.org](#) .
- It will be helpful for Three Parks to know how many of our members and friends are retired City workers. If you are one, please click [here](#) and let Lynn know.