



## 10 transfers that are in ideal situations with their new teams

SPORTS, 1B



# The LEADER

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## Hochul angry at reckless drivers

### Plans to snag them in work zones

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Rochester Democrat and Chronicle  
USA TODAY NETWORK

New York is ramping up its efforts to deter speeding and distracted driving in work zones this spring and summer, in-

cluding a previously successful tactic of tasking undercover police officers in construction uniforms to snag and ticket reckless motorists.

According to Gov. Kathy Hochul's office, after three straight years of decline, work zone crashes on the New York State Thruway surged in 2025, with 228 crashes leading to 28 injuries. This happened despite numerous programs to lessen the incidents, like the state's Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement program,

established on the Thruway in 2021.

On New York state Department of Transportation-owned roads, there were 366 work zone crashes, resulting in 58 injuries and two fatalities in 2025.

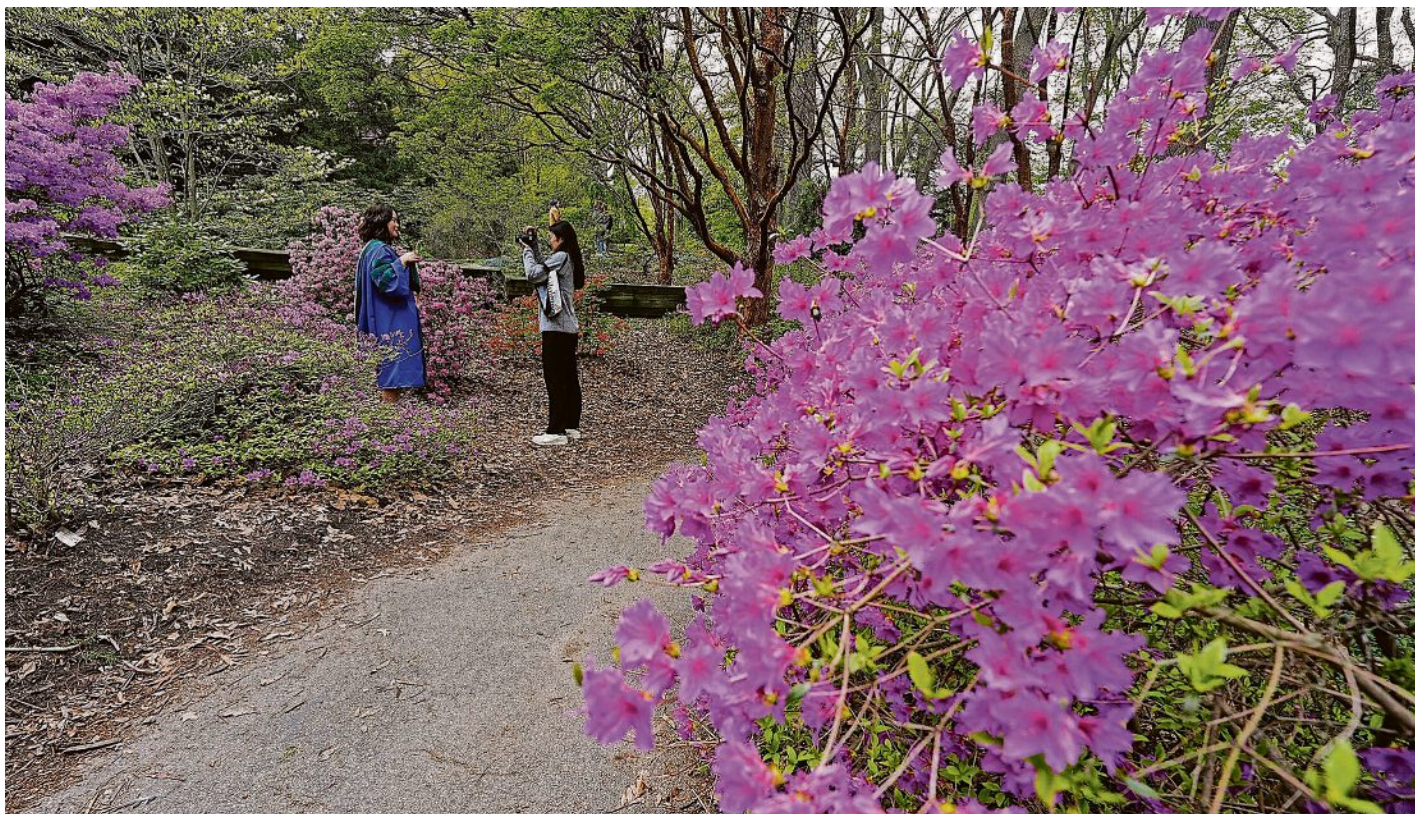
These incidents were primarily caused by speeding, distracted driving, following too closely, unsafe lane changes, and failure to obey warning signs and flagger instructions, Hochul's office said.

"Every roadside worker deserves to re-

turn home safely at the end of their shift," Gov. Kathy Hochul said in a statement on Monday, April 20. "The number of intrusions into work zones is alarming and shows that too many drivers are still ignoring the law and putting lives at risk."

Hochul's announcement of new initiatives regarding work zone safety kicked off National Work Zone Awareness Week, a weeklong campaign that

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A college student poses for a photo among the azalea and rhododendrons collection in Highland Park on opening day of the Rochester Lilac Festival in Rochester on May 9, 2025. TINA MACINTYRE-YEE/DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE

## New York's best flower festivals bloom this spring

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April showers bring May flowers! New York is celebrating spring with dozens of flower festivals across the state. I Love NY released a list of these festivities for the 2026 season. Whether you are looking to enjoy a peaceful stroll in a garden or a family-friendly event your kids will love, there is something for everyone this spring season.

### Popular spring flower festivals in New York

● **Macy's Flower Show:** April 23-May 10 in New York City's Herald Square  
The theme of the 2026 Macy's Flower Show is "Homegrown." Macy's in Herald Square will transform into a flower oasis with greenhouse-inspired installations featuring large planters, stained-glass garden panels and yarn-wrapped trees. It will be free and open to the public during store hours. Macy's in Herald Square

is located at 151 West 34th Street in New York, NY.

● **Buffalo's 13th Annual Cherry Blossom Festival:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 25-26 in the Japanese Garden at Delaware Park.

The 13th Annual Cherry Blossom Festival will include pink boat rides, Shibuki Taiko Drum performances, the Odori no Kai Dance Group, local musicians, food trucks, vendors, crafts and

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## NY budget is 3 weeks late; some have been later

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New York State Team  
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New York state's budget is now more than three weeks late, which impacts several aspects of state and local government, but many budgets in years past have been much later.

State lawmakers passed their sixth budget extension on Wednesday, April 22, bringing the total amount spent on the late budget to \$12.7 billion. And while three weeks seems like a long time for the state to be behind on deciding where its money is going, others have extended well into the summer months.

Policy issues such as adjustments to the state's climate law, auto insurance reforms and changes to the state's environmental review process have been holding up this year's budget. Also thrown somewhat haphazardly into the mix are Tier 6 pension reforms and a tax on New York City second homes.

For starters, this time last year, budget negotiations were still ongoing and would be for another two weeks. The legislature passed 12 extenders in 2025 and eventually passed the budget May 8.

Crossing the finish line in May isn't all that bad, comparatively. The state's

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### NEW YORK BUDGET

## NYPA jet use raises concerns

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The New York Senate's majority leader has used Albany state budget talks to press the Hochul administration for answers about the New York Power Authority's \$7.5 million plane, questioning why struggling ratepayers should get stuck with part of the tab to fly NYPA executives and board members to meetings, press conferences and ribbon cuttings.

State Sen. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, a pivotal voice among state Democrats, raised the issue during some of the contentious discussions that have stalled adoption of New York's budget beyond its April 1 due date, according to her office.

The Westchester County Democrat has been critical of NYPA's flying habits, telling the USA TODAY Network in November: "It is unacceptable that the agency tasked with overseeing the

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The New York Power Authority uses this \$7.5 million turboprop airplane to fly executives and other personnel around New York for meetings and press conferences, often to promote climate-friendly initiatives.

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