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“For nonprofits especially, they have real cash flow challenges and I have said this to my team: A lot of the nonprofits that do such crucial work in this city, they are hand-to-mouth when it comes to their budgets,” Bill de Blasio said. | Office of Mayor Bill de Blasio

Following Stringer report, De Blasio calls on agencies to fix contract backlog

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Mayor Bill de Blasio said he will instruct city agencies to fix the growing issue of delayed city contracts, which disproportionately affect nonprofits and their ability to provide human services to vulnerable New Yorkers.

“For nonprofits especially, they have real cash flow challenges and I have said this to my team: A lot of the nonprofits that do such crucial work in this city, [they are hand-to-mouth](#) when it comes to their budgets,” de Blasio said during an unrelated press conference Thursday, noting he was unfamiliar with the details of a recently published report from City Comptroller Scott Stringer detailing the backlog.

“The city of New York is obviously a huge entity, so we owe it to them to pay them as quickly as possible, so I’m not satisfied with the state of affairs,” he said. The Mayor’s statement comes two days after Stringer released [an analysis](#) on delayed city contracts, which found nearly 91 percent of 2,224 registered human service contracts in fiscal year 2017 were registered after their official start dates, compared to 81.4 percent of contracts across city agencies.

[Stringer](#) said the five agencies that oversee the contracts should adhere to a specific time frame for standardized contract reviews, along with creating a transparent tracking system for vendors to monitor a contract through every stage of the process.

To enact the comptroller’s recommendations, Stringer’s office in January asked the de Blasio administration to call a Procurement Policy Board meeting.

The de Blasio administration created the Nonprofit Resiliency Committee under the Mayor’s Office of Contract Services in 2016 and allocated \$300 million in last year’s budget to address indirect rates and living adjustments. Despite that allocation, registrations continue to lag behind.

Agencies such as the Department of Homeless Services and Human Resources Administration submitted all of their contracts retroactively. The Department of Education, Department for the

Aging and Department of Youth and Community Development submitted more than 90 percent of their contracts retroactively. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene submitted 265 of its 314 contracts, or 84.4 percent, retroactively, according to Stringer's report.

De Blasio acknowledged some backlog across city agencies was expected, but he emphasized the current speed of the payouts is not meeting his expectations.

"I'm sure there are some backlog issues that put extra pressure on agencies," he said. "There are many, many layers that slow things down, but that is not the whole answer."