

The New York Public Library

Connections

2025 A free guide for formerly incarcerated people in New York City



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people in New York City

Edited by

Kate Heenan



New York
Public
Library

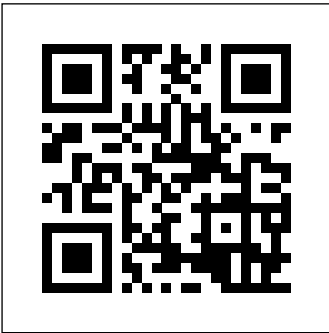
Connections 2025

Single copies of *Connections* are available free of charge to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people throughout New York State. Send all requests to:

Jail & Prison Services
The New York Public Library
40 West 20th Street
New York, NY 10011

Connections 2025 is available as a PDF online at:

nypl.org/jps



CONNECTIONS 2025
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The New York Public Library, 2025.

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About Connections

Every agency listed in *Connections* has been contacted in order to provide current and relevant information. Where listings could not be verified by phone, the organization's website was used to check basic program and contact information. When updating the 2025 edition, we asked organizations what services and programs are being provided, both remotely and in person.

Please be advised that the moment *Connections* is printed, it is out of date. We highly encourage everyone to contact organizations before visiting in person to confirm operating hours, services, and eligibility requirements in order to have the most up-to-date information.

NOTE: Information in *Connections 2025* was compiled before the new presidential administration. It is important to stay up to date with information about laws and policies impacting people's rights and safety, particularly in regard to the administration's stated goals for immigration policies, anti-discrimination policies, and LGBTQI+ rights. The timelines for newly enacted federal laws will differ depending on each policy and its subsequent legal challenges.





The information included in this book is not intended as legal or medical advice.

Connections contains a selective listing of resources in New York City. If you feel we have missed a valuable resource, or if you represent an organization that would like to be included in *Connections*, please contact us: Jail & Prison Services, The New York Public Library, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011.

The information included in *Connections* is organized into chapters based on types of services and groups of users. No single chapter includes every resource that may be useful to a particular reader. When using this book, we recommend exploring multiple chapters to find the resources best suited to your needs. The table of contents and the index are additional useful tools to find resources.

Conexiones is the Spanish translation of *Connections*. The most

recent translation is available online as a PDF at nypl.org/jps. Spanish speakers who are incarcerated can request up to 40 printed pages at a time, to be sent via mail by writing to: Jail & Prison Services, The New York Public Library, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011.

ICONS: Four symbols are used in this edition. The  symbol next to the name of an organization means they have Spanish speaking staff or interpreters for Spanish speakers. A bridge  next to the name of an organization means they work with people who are currently incarcerated, and the organization can be contacted pre-release, or by court or attorney referral. The  symbol means the organization offers alternative-to-incarceration (ATI) programs. These may also be called alternative-to-detention or diversion programs. The icons are used only when the information is confirmed by a representative from the organization. The  symbol is used throughout *Connections*, to highlight Know Your Rights information.

Artists! You may request instructions and a template for submitting art for the 2026 edition of *Connections*, by writing to:

Jail & Prison Services
The New York Public Library
40 West 20th Street
New York, NY 10011

Acknowledgments

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Many thanks go to Victor Pate, Victor M. Herrera, and Jhody Polk for contributing their powerful words. We are grateful to this brilliant group of people who shared their experiences with us and all of our readers.

We are very proud to showcase the artwork of 12 currently and

formerly incarcerated artists throughout this book. Our beautiful cover art was created by A. Hyman. We appreciate and thank everyone who sent us artwork to be considered.

Much support and learning is gained from those who write to us from prisons with their feedback.

A huge thanks goes to NYPL's BookOps and Logistics teams who are responsible for the book's distribution.

Funding for *Connections* is provided by the New York State Education Department, Division of Library Development.

New York City Public Libraries

New York City has three public library systems that offer free reading materials, information, programming, resources, classes, WiFi, and more. For locations, hours, and to learn more about what your library is currently offering, contact:

The New York Public Library (Bronx, Manhattan, Staten Island)
Call **917.275.6975** or visit www.nypl.org.

Brooklyn Public Library
Call **718.968.7275** or visit www.bklynlibrary.org.

Queens Public Library
Call **718.990.0700** or visit www.queenslibrary.org.

All three public library systems use a language line, which provides over-the-phone interpretation in multiple languages.

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Profiles

YOU CANNOT BUY THE REVOLUTION. YOU CANNOT MAKE
THE REVOLUTION. YOU CAN ONLY BE THE REVOLUTION. IT
IS IN YOUR SPIRIT, OR IT IS NOWHERE.

— URSULA K. LE GUIN, *THE DISPOSSESSED: AN AMBIGUOUS
UTOPIA*

VICTOR PATE

WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.



I am a Legislative Criminal Justice Reform/Abolitionist Advocate, Co-Director of The HALTsolitary Campaign, and Co-Founder of the NYC Chapter of the National Action Network's Second Chance Committee.

I served a cumulative total of over fifteen years in the criminal legal system's juvenile detentions, jails, and prisons. My first experience was at the age of nine years old when I was sent to what was then known as the Spofford Juvenile Detention Center, in the Bronx. The judge who sentenced me to three months for a group burglary of a variety store said to me that the, "time away should straighten me out." Although this was my first real contact with the system, no alternatives were recommended. I believe this first experience set me on the path to multiple encounters with the carceral system.

I was raised by an aunt, whom I later found out had adopted me from an adoption hospital where I had been left by my mother who told her where I was. I did not have a father figure in my life to help guide me into manhood and so I was left for the most part to my own devices.

As I began my development into manhood, I began to see all of

the shine that some people in my neighborhood possessed, and I wanted it too! I can't say that I was a deprived child because my aunt and uncle took very good care of me as best they could. However, I wanted more and I viewed the hustle of the streets as a means to the more. I began with petty crimes like stealing from stores, vandalizing, and burglaries. I was around 10 or 11 years old when I started venturing out into the street life that would later come with so many consequences. I started experimenting with all types of substances, eventually selling and using drugs, and trying to feed my habit and accumulate funds at the same time.

I was arrested and sent to Rikers several times. Going to Rikers was, at times, almost like a reunion because most of the people from my block were there and I was welcomed as if I was there for vacation. I served one year in the adolescent facility on Rikers, which was followed by multiple encounters with the jail system, and of course I eventually made my rounds of the State correctional facilities. Being in a State facility was a whole different experience as many of the people in the state facilities were focused on education, vocation, and law.

By this time, I was in my forties and was burned out with being a slave on the plantation. I had decided to do something different and get an education. I didn't immediately become engaged in the self-rehabilitation process, but I eventually spent most of my time in school, obtaining my GED and learning other skills. Most of all, I really enjoyed organizing, facilitating groups, and advocating for better programs for the people incarcerated with me. I became an advocate for prisoners' rights. I vowed that I would never become a slave again and that I would work towards reformation and abolition of the carceral system.

My last encounter with the prison system was in 1995 and I successfully completed parole in 1999. My journey on the reentry trail was not an easy one. I had to deal with the shelter system, transitional housing, sleeping on couches, trains, and any form of housing I could find. I was determined not to go backward so I had to swallow my pride and press forward.

One Saturday morning in Harlem I went to a rally at the NYC Chapter of the National Action Network where I heard the

Reverend Al Sharpton speak. He offered an opportunity for people to become members and to bring ideas for inclusion in the organization's mission. Myself, my wife, and another formerly incarcerated person submitted a proposal to start a Second Chance Committee with the goals of assisting incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people and their families. Reverend Sharpton agreed to our proposal and officially announced that we were the newest committee at NAN in 2009. My continuing journey led me to the Correctional Association of NY, housed in the old Theresa Towers Hotel in Harlem. There, I got my beginnings as a member of the Campaign to Repeal the Rockefeller Drug Laws.

My commitment to not being a slave ever again and to changing the conditions for those inside continues to be a motivating factor for me. It has allowed me to have been a part of most of the successful campaigns for NY criminal justice reform legislation passed in the past twenty-five years. For those of us who have been on the plantation, there is life after incarceration. One thing I learned for sure is that prisons and jails do not reform, they only punish. We have the power to make healthy decisions that can yield positive results.

The decision to change behaviors must come from within. No one is going to do more for you than you are willing to do for yourself. Each one of us has different reentry experiences, depending on the relationships you have forged inside and out. Believe that what you have to offer is worth something and be willing to start from where you are to get where you want to be.

I have been home for twenty-five years, and by God's grace have received numerous acknowledgements for my work, and have a great group of people that I work and socialize with. I'm now one of the Co-Directors with the HALTsolitary Confinement Coalition and we successfully advocated for an end to long term solitary confinement in prisons and jails and our legislation passed and was implemented in 2022. This is a testament to what is possible if you are willing to sacrifice, be diligent, and put in the work to achieve your goals.

Never give up and never give in!

VICTOR M. HERRERA



WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.

My experience is not so dissimilar to many reading this. As someone impacted by incarceration, my lived experiences came as a complete turnaround from what I was prepared for and accustomed to. A Brooklyn native, my youthful years were both exciting and dysfunctional. My first understanding of my calling came during my first encounter in prison at the age of 18. Serving two prison terms and recollecting my time on Rikers Island, I was a studious and avid writer, working at the law library. Coming to bare bones learning of the law intrigued me to continue pursuing the course of understanding the system and its prosecutorial apparatus. Though there are pros and cons to understanding the internal workings of imprisonment, I faltered not. I chose to pursue a career in criminal justice work, using the experience of my incarceration and my continuing education to help others navigate the system with the most informed means of justice one could muster under the circumstances. My first encounter with grassroots organizing came in 2012 with my good friend and mentor, Glenn E. Martin, founder of JustLeadershipUSA and the Close Rikers Campaign. His leadership opened my passion to end trauma and push for more humane treatment for people facing jail and prison, which I carry today.

I never thought I'd see the day where those pains would be a platform that others could see, hear and learn from. I don't isolate myself from my experiences as they relate to who I've become today. Formerly incarcerated, homeless, and experiencing the manifestations of trauma, I would not understand that pain until I came to know the root causes. Joining others in grassroots organizing brought me a semblance of my calling in life. I used the approach of "My pain is my platform," in mentoring many of the communities that are impacted by practices leading to mass incarceration and trauma-based mental health epidemics. Coming from the experience of incarceration, as traumatizing as it may have been, I embraced the idea that something good had to come from it. Released from prison in 2001, I returned to a profession well known to me, doing roadside assistance as a tow truck operator, which I have to say was a good means of earning an honest living. As part of my civic duty, I learned and provided supervisory assistance during the elections at the polls, which also provides an honest income. I admit, my own recovery was not an easy feat, as I was confronted with PTSD and made a commitment to treatment.

In the following years I also made a commitment to use my experience to advocate for others. I became a member of Freedom Agenda, a member-led project that organizes to bring about decarceration and system transformation. Instrumental to the needs of the community will be reducing the prison population by 2030 and, keeping with what I knew firsthand, providing an alternative to pre-trial detention, seeking to fund more resources in the community in place of jails and prisons. Freedom Agenda continues the push to close Rikers, binding the governmental administration to the law. With the great friendship and leadership of Co-Director Sarita Daftary-Steel, and the grassroots team of leaders and members, we continue today to assure that Rikers is finally closed by August 31, 2027. So long as I have a platform to share my voice, there I will be seeking the change we all so desperately need and demand...

JHODY POLK



WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.

When I was 23 years old I was sentenced to eight years in prison and five years of probation in Florida. At the time of my arrest I was the mother of a two year old son and a five month old baby girl. I was a bail bondsman in my hometown and in college with hopes of becoming a dentist. I surrendered myself for the charges of home invasion robbery, arson, burglary of an unoccupied dwelling, grand theft auto, and larceny. If I am honest, I was relieved when I surrendered myself. I am the oldest of three children and the only girl and I have always been my mama’s mama. I was the primary caretaker in my house after my parents separated when I was young. My outside circumstances have never reflected the world that I lived within my mind. I was a dreamer and thinker. The one who was going to make sure we stayed together. The “smart” one. I was going to be our savior. I was also a drug addict by the time I turned 18. I was emotionally insecure and I was angry.

I never imagined that I would be sentenced to prison time. It was my first arrest as an adult, my first felony. I truly believed that I would receive a slap on the wrist. When the judge said eight years, the first thing I did was add eight years to the age of my kids and I called my mom to ask if my grandmother would be alive in eight

years. Although she guaranteed me my Nanny had plenty of time, she was gone within my first year.

I was always aware that there were two paths of success before me, the professional route and the street route. I knew that going to prison would be a badge of honor in my neighborhood. I began plotting how my prison sentence would be like going to college, the school of hard knocks. I was prepared to go to prison and hook up with the baddest women in the state and I was going to learn how to come home and set it off. Since I couldn't be a dentist, I would become the Queen of My Streets. Luckily for me and my community, I didn't find hard criminals and thugs when I got to prison. I found poets, writers, actors, mothers, and jailhouse lawyers. Inside was the first time I had positive and healthy relationships with women. Prison has a way of stripping all of the masks away from you in a way that you can only be yourself. I realized that I had spent so much of my life becoming what others needed or wanted me to be that I had no clue of who I was. I would listen to women share their stories of mistakes, victories, good times, bad times and lessons learned. I became free in prison. I am in no way glorifying prison, but the violence and injustice we faced in prison as women mirrored the violence I had been facing all my life. In my community, my home, my schools and most of all in my body as a black woman. I was incarcerated long before I came to prison.

I was assigned to work in the law library and became a certified law clerk. Learning the law changed my life. I took pride in translating the law into a language we could all understand. We used the same laws that were used against us to liberate ourselves. I supported women with criminal appeals, child support, divorces, immigration, and constitutional rights. I soon became the law clerk for women in closed confinement and death row. Every woman I served shaped my life with the trust of her story. I was seeing the power and violence of the law. This sealed my fate. I knew I would someday become a lawyer. I desired to learn the law so I could give it away to the people in my community.

I returned home a brand new me, but society and my family were still the same. It was tough and it is still tough even ten years later. I came home with my reentry plan. I had my children back immediately and a job within a month. I was married and in college

within the year. But there were days I longed to return to prison. Not because it was better, but because it was easier. I had to put dreams on the back burner to face the collateral consequences of incarceration. I used my knowledge of the law to early terminate probation. I couldn't live in low income housing and faced discrimination in employment, so knowing the law helped me protect myself and my children. But there were days I still longed to go back. One day, after breaking all of the glass items in my house under the stress of surviving the real world, I remembered this saying that a buddhist teacher taught us in Mind Body Stress Reduction class, "thoughts become words, words become actions." I realized that I wasn't only saying I wanted to go back, I was indeed preparing to go back. I told someone for the first time what I was thinking, feeling and doing. I am so glad I didn't give up.

Two years later I was introduced to a national movement of formerly incarcerated people who were changing their communities through policy, organizing, and healing. I was hired at the River Phoenix Center for Peacebuilding where I learned about restorative justice, trauma informed practices, social emotional learning, and communication self esteem. The following year I won a Soros Justice Fellowship and I formed the Jailhouse Lawyer Initiative, housed at NYU School of Law. We currently have over 1,000 incarcerated members, from every state in the US. I have yet to become a lawyer, but I spend my days connecting lawyers, law students and other legal professionals to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated jailhouse lawyers across the country and abroad to build new legal systems and practices to democratize the law. I am also making sure that jailhouse lawyers have access to adequate legal education and peacebuilding skills on the inside. I rarely ever think about returning to prison to live, but I live to visit my brothers and sisters inside to teach and inspire. My mission is not to change people, but to be a mirror, how women inside were for me, for people to see themselves through the eyes of the Universe and not the eyes of the world. I am known as the Alchemist. I have learned how to turn nothing into something, pain into success, and my experience as a law clerk into a national movement. Dreams do come true.

Formerly Incarcerated People

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM WOULD HAVE ONE BELIEVE THAT IT IS INSANE TO RESIST THIS, THE MIGHTIEST OF EMPIRES, BUT WHAT HISTORY REALLY SHOWS IS THAT TODAY'S EMPIRE IS TOMORROW'S ASHES; THAT NOTHING LASTS FOREVER, AND THAT TO NOT RESIST IS TO ACQUIESCE IN YOUR OWN OPPRESSION. THE GREATEST FORM OF SANITY THAT ANYONE CAN EXERCISE IS TO RESIST THAT FORCE THAT IS TRYING TO REPRESS, OPPRESS, AND FIGHT DOWN THE HUMAN SPIRIT.

— MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Resources Similar to Connections

The following guides are known resources similar to *Connections* that cover areas of New York State outside of the City.

Capital Regions Connections

(Covers Albany, Schenectady, and Rensselaer)

The Center for Law and Justice

Pine West Plaza, Building 2, Washington Avenue Ext., Albany, NY 12205

www.cflj.org/connections

A New Path: A Resource Guide for Re-Entry in Allegany, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Yates Counties

Southern Tier Library System–Outreach Services

9424 Scott Road, Painted Post, NY 14870

Telephone: 607.962.3141 x204

<https://stls.libguides.com/c.php?g=1182873&p=8650858>

Finding Your Way: A Reentry Guide for People Returning from Prison or Jail to Cayuga, Cortland, Seneca, Tioga and Tompkins Counties in NYS

Finger Lakes Library System–Outreach Department

1300 Dryden Road, Ithaca, NY 14850

English and Spanish Version: www.flls.org/resource-guides

North Country Reentry Resources

(Covers Jefferson, Lewis, Oswego, and St. Lawrence)

Online only at: <https://ncls.org/communitydirectory>

Community Connections: For people returning to Clinton, Essex, or Franklin Counties from a correctional facility

Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System–Outreach

33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, NY 12901

<https://cefls.org/stafftrustees/services/outreach>

Connections: A Guide to Transitional Services in Erie County

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library–Transitional Services Division

1 Lafayette Square, Buffalo, NY 14203

English and Spanish Version:

www.buffalolib.org/services/transitional-services-division

Hudson Valley Connections: A Resource Guide for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals Returning to Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam or Ulster Counties in New York State

Mid-Hudson Library System–Outreach Department
103 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
www.midhudson.org/hvconnections

Community Connections: Serving People in Ontario, Wayne, Wyoming and Livingston (OWWL) Counties

OWWL Library System
2557 State Route 21, Canandaigua, NY 14424
<https://owwl.org/outreach>

Making Moves: A reference guide to Reentry Resources for people impacted by the criminal legal system

Rochester Public Library, Outreach Department
115 South Avenue, Rochester, NY 14604
<https://roccitylibrary.org/services/outreach/making-moves>

Suffolk County Resource Guide

Suffolk County Reentry Task Force C/O Probation Department
Box 188, Yaphank, NY 11980
www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/CJCC/Suffolk-County-Reentry-Task-Force/Resources

Westchester Connections

Westchester Library System–Reentry Services
570 Taxter Road, Elmsford, NY 10523
<https://connections.westchesterlibraries.org>

Reentry Task Force by NYS County

The following are NYS County Reentry Task Forces. Visit <https://doccs.ny.gov/offices> for updated information on services and contact information.

ALBANY COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Department of Mental Health
175 Green Street, Albany, NY 12202
Telephone: 518.447.4555

BROOME COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Southern Tier AIDS Program
22 Riverside Drive, Binghamton, NY 13905
Telephone: 607.798.1706

DUTCHESS COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Exodus Transitional Community
97-99 Cannon Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Telephone: 845.452.7620

ERIE COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Spectrum Human Services
1280 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14202
Telephone: 716.539.5409

KINGS COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

KCDA Re-Entry
350 Jay Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.250.3281

MONROE COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Delphi Rise
72 Hinchey Road, Rochester, NY 14624
Telephone: 585.467.2230

NASSAU COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Leadership Training Institute
50 Clinton Street, Suite 607, Hempstead, NY 11550
Telephone: 516.483.3400

NEW YORK COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Exodus Transitional Community
2268 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10035
Telephone: 917.492.0990

NIAGARA COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Community Missions
1570 Buffalo Avenue, Niagara Falls, NY 14303
Telephone: 716.285.3403 x2258

ONEIDA COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Workforce Development Board
209 Elizabeth Street, Utica, NY 13501

Telephone: 315.207.6951

ONONDAGA COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

John H. Mulroy Civic Center
421 Montgomery Street, 12th Floor, Syracuse, NY 13202
Telephone: 315.435.2985 x7153

ORANGE COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O RECAP, Inc.
201 Broadway, Newburgh, NY 12550
Telephone: 845.568.3445

QUEENS COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O The Fortune Society
29-76 Northern Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101
Telephone: 212.691.7554

RENSSELAER COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O District Attorney's Office
80 2nd Street, Troy, NY 12180
Telephone: 518.270.4040

ROCKLAND COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Bridges
2290 Palisades Center Drive, West Nyack, NY 10994
Telephone: 845.624.1366 x136

SCHENECTADY COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O The Center for Community Justice
144 Barrett Street, Schenectady, NY 12305
Telephone: 518.346.1281

SUFFOLK COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Probation Department
Box 188, Yaphank, NY 11980
Telephone: 631.852.5054

ULSTER COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Family of Woodstock, Inc.
31 Albany Avenue, PO Box 3516, Kingston, NY 12402
Telephone: 845.331.7080

WESTCHESTER COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Department of Community Mental Health
112 East Post Road, White Plains, NY 10601
Telephone: 914.995.2791

Organizations

For programs specialized to serve youth, please see the *Youth* chapter starting on [page 326](#).

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—JUSTICE INITIATIVES—WELCOME HOME

240 Division Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11211
Telephone: 718.622.4460

www.bklynlibrary.org/outreach/justice-initiatives/reentry-services

The Welcome Home program provides support to people coming home from prison provided by Reentry Navigators. Services include one-on-one appointments to help identify needs and goals; guidance on housing, health, reconnecting with loved ones, and more; monthly dinners with peers and resources sharing; and connections to free library services and local groups. Call or text **929.561.9789** for more information and to schedule a one-on-one appointment. Visit the website for information on branch locations and regular hours.

QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—PRISON, JAILS, AND REENTRY OUTREACH

Telephone: 718.990.5104

www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/community-outreach/Jail-Prison-Outreach

Central Branch: 89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432

Ravenswood Community Learning Center

35-32 21st Street, Long Island City, NY 11106

Provides information and connections to resources for people impacted by the criminal legal system. Assists people with obtaining a NYS ID through the ID Assist program. Offers people in NYC DOC custody programming, library service, and reference-by-mail service. Leads programming at Queensboro Correctional Facility, including resume workshops and digital literacy tutorials. Also publishes a Queens-specific Reentry Resource Guide, available on the website or in print at one of the two branches listed above. Visit the website, call, or email reentry@queenslibrary.org for more information on programs and services.

ALLIANCE OF FAMILIES FOR JUSTICE (AFJ)  

8 West 126th Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10027
Telephone: 347.973.0580
<https://afj-ny.org>

Provides support and mobilization to families with currently and formerly incarcerated loved ones. The Family Support Unit offers virtual weekly Family Empowerment Circles and free individual and family counseling services facilitated by an LCSW. Also offers free three-day healing retreats for formerly incarcerated people and their families. The Legal Support Unit provides free legal representation to incarcerated people and their families in matters pertaining to conditions of confinement, visitation, parole preparation, and clemency. Offers advocacy and communication skills trainings, leadership development for directly-impacted people, and regular community organizations meetings. Also offers a Youth Empowerment program and provides monthly healing circles for formerly incarcerated individuals.

BOWERY RESIDENTS' COMMITTEE (BRC)  


131 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001
Telephone: 212.803.5700
www.brc.org

Provides a range of services for New Yorkers focused on overcoming substance use disorder, mental and physical illness, unemployment, and homelessness. Programs include providing transitional housing and shelter, permanent housing, substance use disorder treatment, mental and physical health services, and workforce development. Also operates a Senior Center connecting older adults with recreational activities, health services, educational assistance, nutritious meals, and more.

BROOKLYN DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE— COMMUNITY RESOURCES & RE-ENTRY PROGRAM 

345 Adams Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn NY 11201

Telephone: 718.250.3281

www.brooklynnda.org

Provides reentry services and programs for those who have been released from a NYS facility. Programs include the Kings County Re-entry Task Force (KCRTF), Community & Law Enforcement Resources Together (ComALERT), and the Gender-responsive Re-entry and Support Program (GRASP). The programs provide onsite Medicaid and SNAP enrollment, clothing assistance, HSE classes, life skills workshops, resume creation and employment referrals, substance use disorder treatment, and counseling services. The programs pay for lost copies of birth certificates, and NYS identification. Also connects people to off-site services including emergency shelters, job training opportunities, college enrollment assistance, and medical services.

CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (CASES)  

151 Lawrence Street, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 212.553.6300

www.cases.org

Provides services including alternative-to-bail, alternative-to-incarceration, mental health, substance use treatment, youth education

and employment, and other support services for court-involved New Yorkers.

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES (CCA)  

25 Chapel Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.858.9658
<https://communityalternatives.org>

Supports people across NYS who have been affected by mass incarceration, criminalization, and community disinvestment through a statewide network of direct services, advocacy, organizing, and supporting the leadership of directly-impacted people.

Services provided include gender-based substance treatment and recovery communities, sentence mitigation, court advocacy, workforce readiness, civic restoration services, emergency/transitional housing, student advocacy, violence prevention, and youth mentoring as well as afterschool programming and career exploration for court-involved youth.

CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (CEO)  

50 Broadway, Suite 1604, New York, NY 10004
Telephone: 212.422.4430
www.ceoworks.org

Offers individuals recently coming home from prison immediate paid employment, skills training, and ongoing career support. Services include job-readiness training, transitional employment, job coaching and placement, and retention services. Must be on community supervision or court supervision to be eligible. Eligible participants can begin working after attending an orientation; a photo ID, and original Social Security card (or Green Card for non-US citizens) are required in order to work. Help obtaining documents is provided, including referrals from probation or parole officers if applicable.

Telephone: 646.386.3100

www.innovatingjustice.org

CJI—Brooklyn Justice Initiatives Office

14-16 Dekalb Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 347.404.9972

Conceives, plans, and operates programs with the aim of creating an effective and humane legal system. Projects include community-based violence prevention, alternative-to-incarceration programs, reentry initiatives, and court-based programs. Contact for more information on specific programs, locations throughout NYC, and enrollment requirements.

CIRCLES OF SUPPORT

767 5th Avenue, Floor 23, New York, NY 10153

Telephone: 646.296.5319

www.circlesofsupport.org

A partnership of grassroots organizations working in Harlem and Brooklyn to support individuals ages 16 and over returning home from NYS correctional facilities, led by an Advisory Board of formerly incarcerated individuals. Provides leadership and public-speaking training programs including: Raising My Voice, a leadership through storytelling training program for formerly incarcerated individuals; Raising My Voice Kin, for family members and loved ones of formerly or currently incarcerated individuals, where participants learn to tell their story in a safe supported space; and Talk 2 Me, a weekly conversation-based support group for women who are involved with currently or formerly incarcerated family members. Also provides speaker and community events.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY (CSS)—NEXT DOOR PROJECT



Hotline: 212.614.5441

Offers services including help with conviction history requests, repairing rap sheets, and applying for Certificates of Good Conduct or Certificates of Relief from Disabilities.

See the full listing for Community Service Society on [page 117](#).

DEFY VENTURES

Runs a free, virtual 17-week Entrepreneurship Bootcamp program twice per year for formerly incarcerated individuals.

See the full listing for Defy Ventures on [page 368](#).

DRIVE CHANGE

A paid fellowship program for formerly incarcerated young people ages 18–25.

See the full listing for Drive Change on [page 369](#).

EXODUS TRANSITIONAL COMMUNITY



2268 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 917.492.0990

www.etcny.org

Offers a wide range of services for adults and youth affected by the criminal legal system including mentoring groups, civic engagement courses, leadership development workshops, substance treatment services, trauma counseling sessions, employment services training, and job coaching opportunities. Offices also located in Newburgh and Poughkeepsie. Contact for operating hours and locations.

EXPONENTS



17 Battery Place, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10004
Telephone: 212.243.3434 / Crisis Intervention: 917.681.8531
www.exponents.org

Provides treatment and recovery services, educational services, and professional development and training services for those impacted by HIV/AIDS, substance use disorder, incarceration, and behavioral health challenges. Programs and services include The Menu, ARRIVE, ARRIVE Post-Graduate, Reentry Services Initiative, Drug Treatment Services, Third Way, Center for Personal and Professional Development, and the Judith Loeb Chiara Recovery and Wellness Center. Letters of reasonable assurance are provided. The Crisis Intervention line is available 24 hours a day, except Thursday. Call to schedule an appointment.

THE FOCUS FORWARD PROJECT



PO Box 2892, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008
Telephone: 347.619.2080
<https://focusforwardproject.org>

A 12-week course for people who have been charged with federal crimes. Each class is structured to spend time on a book discussion along with developing life skills including resume writing, interviewing, conflict resolution, public speaking, budgeting, and more. Participants also create reentry plans. Classes are available to those incarcerated at the MDC-Brooklyn federal center and to those on federal pretrial or pre-sentencing supervised release. Also offers referrals for free virtual mental and behavioral health services as well as referrals for employment opportunities.

FORGING AHEAD FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT (FACES)—STRIVING TOWARDS ACHIEVING REWARDING SKILLS (STARS)



123 West 115th Street, New York, NY 10026

Telephone: 212.663.7772

www.facesny.org

Offers free services to individuals who have had any involvement with the criminal legal system. Provides vocational services including job-readiness workshops and job-placement assistance, academic counseling and tutoring, and mentorships. Other services include anger management, substance use treatment and counseling, Narcan training, child support payment reduction assistance, HIV/HCV/STI testing, a food pantry, a clothes bank, and enrollment assistance for health insurance and SNAP benefits.

THE FORTUNE SOCIETY   

29-76 Northern Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101

Telephone: 212.691.7554

<https://fortunesociety.org>

Offers a range of services and support for individuals ages 17 and over who have had involvement with the criminal legal system. Provides assistance with benefits enrollment, case management, housing, and education, as well as employment services, outpatient substance use treatment, outpatient mental health services, family services, creative arts programs, food and nutrition programming, HIV/AIDS services, and alternative-to-incarceration programs. Discharge planning services are available for those on Rikers Island, as well as outreach activities in NYS DOCCS facilities. No legal services are offered.

GETTING OUT AND STAYING OUT (GOSO)

A reentry program for youth 16–24 years old.

See the full listing for GOSO on [page 333](#).

HOUSING WORKS COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE—RE-ENTRY PROGRAM

Telephone: 718.277.0386

<https://healthcare.housingworks.org>

Connects soon-to-be released and formerly incarcerated individuals to medical, dental, mental health, and case management services, including substance use programs, as well as vocational training, help obtaining entitlements, and referrals to long-term housing placement. Call for eligibility requirements.

JUSTICE THROUGH CODE AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

1190 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY, 10027

<https://centerforjustice.columbia.edu/justicethroughcode>

Creates pathways to high-earning careers for people with a conviction history through three technical and professional skills training programs, The Foundation, Pathways, and The Flagship. The Foundation program is 2.5 months and teaches modern skills for career success. Topics include habits and organization, generative AI, communications skills and technical writing, problem solving and critical thinking, job search and resume building, and more. The Pathways program is five months and teaches technical thinking for problem solving. Topics include computer science foundations, JavaScript fundamentals, advanced CSS, data structure and algorithms, database management, and more. The Flagship program is 9.5 months and offers courses on technical skills including Python, big data and machine learning, generative AI applications, APIs and JSON, cybersecurity, and more. The Foundation is offered three times annually. Pathways and The Flagship are offered biannually. JTC's programs provide wrap-around support services to all Fellows including career advising from Columbia Business School MBA students, mentorship programs, and lifetime access to a career coach within Columbia Business School. Visit the website for more information including applicant assessment and interest form.

JUSTLEADERSHIPUSA

PO Box 1730, New York, NY 10037**Telephone: 347.454.2195**<https://jlusa.org>

Provides capacity building, advocacy, and leadership development trainings for individuals impacted by the justice system. Leading with Conviction (LwC) is a 12-month advanced leadership training for formerly incarcerated and experienced leaders. Emerging Leaders is a training opportunity for formerly incarcerated people with less leadership experience, who are committed to systemic carceral reform.

MUSIC ON THE INSIDE (MOTI)

Telephone: 212.580.6225www.musicontheinside.org


Works with professional musicians to connect through a shared love of music with communities impacted by incarceration. Provides music classes in prison and reentry mentorships, which pair musically-engaged individuals with a professional musician on their instrument for music and life-skills support. Currently, mentorships are provided on piano, guitar, bass, flute, violin, saxophone, drums, singing, and spoken word. Community programs for youth include music workshops for court-impacted young adults in partnership with youth-based organizations. Visit the website for more information, including the Music Mentorship application.

NETWORK SUPPORT SERVICES, INC.

555 Bergen Avenue, 3rd Floor, Bronx, NY 10455**Telephone: 347.584.8601**www.networkssi.org

Provides therapeutic reentry support supplemented by case management. Services include anger management training, ben-

efits assistance, educational services, family counseling, health services by referral, job placement, job readiness, job training, individual counseling, and life-skills training. Has programs in nine NYS prisons and alternative-to-incarceration programs with Manhattan Criminal Court, Bronx Criminal Court, Bronx Defenders, and Bronx Community Solutions. Also offers discharge and resettlement services for individuals being released from NYS Prisons to the NYC area. Assistance can include a smartphone with a plan, backpack filled with toiletries, cash stipend, MetroCard, transport from the facility back to the community, and more.

**NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)—
CERTIFICATES PROJECT, SEALING PROJECT, & PROJECT
RESTORE** 

The Certificates Project provides assistance to individuals with conviction records with the application process, timing, and the documentation required to obtain Certificates of Relief from Disabilities and Certificates of Good Conduct. These Certificates help break down barriers to employment, housing, and civic participation.

The Sealing Project provides free consultations to determine whether individuals are eligible for conviction sealing under New York Law, and assistance with the application process.

Project Restore provides free representation to individuals with conviction records who have been denied vocational licenses and who are challenging the denial. Advocacy includes representing license seekers in administrative law proceedings, appealing adverse Administrative Law Judge decisions to agency commissioners, and, when warranted, appealing commissioners' decisions to the New York State Supreme Court via Article 78 Petitions.

See the full listing for NYCLA on [page 206](#).

OSBORNE ASSOCIATION  

NYC Reentry Hotline: 833.672.3733

www.osborneny.org

809 Westchester Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455
Telephone: 718.707.2600

175 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.637.6560

Provides a range of programming and services for defendants, formerly incarcerated people on probation and parole, people in prison, and families of currently or formerly incarcerated people. Offers workforce and employment services, young adult services, court advocacy services, support for families impacted by incarceration, housing support, elder reentry services, video visiting, and health and wellness services.

Call the Reentry Hotline for referral information on any reentry needs, including medical services, mental health services, housing, and entitlements; provides full reentry services including pre-release discharge planning and reentry case management.

THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH—PRISON MINISTRY



490 Riverside Drive, New York, NY, 10027
Social Justice Office: 212.870.6700
www.trcnyc.org

A faith-based organization of volunteers that conducts advocacy and outreach programs on behalf of people currently and formerly incarcerated, and their families. Services include referrals to organizations and agencies that provide direct services, holiday gift collections for the children of people currently incarcerated, and more. Contact for more information and meeting dates.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NETWORK (SJN)



90 Vermilyea Avenue, Unit 618, New York, NY 10034
Telephone: 929.333.5563
<https://sjnus.org>

Offers three programs to people impacted by incarceration: RAP, REP, and FAP. The Reentry Assessment Program (RAP) connects people who are currently incarcerated and/or in transitional housing programs in NYC to service providers to meet their reentry needs and provides ongoing support to clients. It is recommended that currently incarcerated people mail a letter of interest to the address above six months prior to release. The Reentry Educational Program (REP) connects clients with academic institutions to support students in pursuing higher educational opportunities and provides ongoing support throughout their academic experience. The Family Assistance Program (FAP) connects families of impacted individuals to services such as clothing, food, mental health providers, healthcare providers, and more. The Comic Books for Justice Initiative promotes literacy within correctional institutions and New York public schools, and service providers can contact SJN to request comic books for their participants and students. To enroll in any program, people can schedule an introductory meeting with an SJN team member by clicking 'Contact Us' on the website and using the calendar to book an appointment.

SWOP BEHIND BARS (SWBB)

Support Line: 877.776.2004

www.swopbehindbars.org

Provides resources, educational programs, and advocacy services to sex workers and trafficking victims impacted by the carceral system. The toll-free community support line provides assistance with safety planning, networking, and accessing resources. Incarcerated members can be matched up with pen pals and receive a reentry guide and handbook six months prior to release. Upon release and on request, members are provided a smartphone with 90 days worth of service, full size hygiene items, and assistance with procuring identification documents, as well as setting up critical accounts for receiving public and private resources. Also regularly refers incarcerated survivors of violence to legal counsel to assist with vacating criminal records.

THRIVE FOR LIFE PRISON PROJECT



30 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.337.7544

<https://thriveforlife.org>

A faith-based organization providing holistic services and support to formerly incarcerated individuals. The continuity of care model focuses on purpose, education, employment, and housing. Offers transitional housing at Abraham House and supportive housing for men transitioning from Abraham House to Ignacio House of Studies to continue their higher education. Residents have access to scholarships for partnering universities and colleges. Provides job-readiness training and assists with career development through partnerships with various organizations. The program also includes support in searching for and securing permanent affordable housing. A food pantry operates on Sat 9am–11am. Also provides on-site education including OSHA 10 and 30, Computer Tech, and ESOL. Contact for more information about programs, services, and eligibility requirements.

WOMEN'S PRISON ASSOCIATION (WPA)



Mailing Address: 347 East 10th Street, New York, NY 10009

Telephone: 646.292.7710

www.wpaonline.org

Provides services for women who have been impacted by the criminal legal system, and their families. Partners with women to find safe and affordable housing, develop workplace skills and build careers, reunify families, access healthcare, work toward personal goals, and avoid additional system involvement. Also provides help with release planning for those currently incarcerated.

Advocacy, Organizing, & News Resources

CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NY (CANY)



PO Box 793, Brooklyn, NY 11207
Telephone: 212.254.5700
www.correctionalassociation.org

An independent prison oversight organization with authority under New York state law [Correction Law 146 (3)]. Monitors state prisons and reports findings to government stakeholders and the broader public. In addition to system-level oversight, confidentially communicates with incarcerated people about their experiences and concerns through mail correspondence, one-on-one interviews during prison monitoring visits, and phone. Accepts collect calls.

COURT WATCH NYC

www.courtwatchnyc.org

A volunteer-powered program that organizes for transformative change toward abolition. With volunteers, watches court proceedings with the aim of shifting power in the courtroom, reporting what's seen, and holding court actors accountable to ending the injustices in the criminal legal system that target Black, Brown, Indigenous, immigrant/migrant, and queer and TGNC communities. Visit the website for reports and more information.

CRIP JUSTICE

<https://cripjustice.org>

Advocates and shares resources around the intersections of policing, prisons, and disability justice. Campaigns to free disabled people currently incarcerated in jails, prisons, psychiatric hospitals, and other institutions, as well as providing letters of support. Visit

the website for more information about campaigns, alternatives to policing, and organizing resources.

CRITICAL RESISTANCE—NEW YORK CITY

PO Box 3492, New York, NY 10163

Telephone: 510.444.0484

<https://criticalresistance.org/our-chapters/cr-new-york>


A national grassroots organization that works to build an international movement to abolish the prison industrial complex (PIC). Works on campaigns and projects to materially reduce the size and scope of the PIC, publishes *The Abolitionist*, an inside-outside newspaper, and corresponds with people currently imprisoned to break the isolation of cages, provide resources, and share analysis.

The NYC chapter is currently fighting for the NY Dignity Not Detention campaign, which seeks to end immigrant detention in NY. Write, call, or visit the website for more information.

FREEDOM AGENDA

<https://fa.urbanjustice.org>

A member-led project dedicated to organizing people and communities directly impacted by incarceration to achieve decarceration and system transformation, including closing the Rikers Island jail complex. Members build advocacy skills and collective power through trainings and taking on leadership roles in campaigns and grassroots organizing. Membership meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm. Visit the website or contact **fa@urbanjustice.org** for resources, including research and fact sheets, and more information on events.

**INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD (IWW)—
INCARCERATED WORKERS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE
(IWOC)** 

IWOC HQ, PO Box 414304, Kansas City, MO 64141
<https://incarceratedworkers.org>

A non-profit organization working to dismantle the family policing system while simultaneously investing in community support that keeps families together. Conducts legislative, judicial, and media advocacy, and organizes in communities directly impacted by child welfare surveillance and control. Campaign priorities include family Miranda rights, reimagining mandated reporting to be mandated supporting, and access to timely representation for families being investigated by ACS. Visit the website for more information, educational resources including Know Your Rights information, and events.

**JMACFORFAMILIES (JUST MAKING A CHANGE FOR
FAMILIES OR JMAC)**

<https://jmacforfamilies.org>

A non-profit organization working to dismantle the family policing system while simultaneously investing in community support that keeps families together. Conducts legislative, judicial, and media advocacy, and organizes in communities directly impacted by child welfare surveillance and control. Campaign priorities include family Miranda rights, reimagining mandated reporting to be mandated supporting, and access to timely representation for families being investigated by ACS. Visit the website for more information, educational resources including Know Your Rights information, and events.

THE MARSHALL PROJECT 

www.themarshallproject.org

A nonpartisan, nonprofit news organization that covers the US criminal legal system. Produces *News Inside*, a free print publication distributed nationally in jails and prisons, published three times per year (April, August, and December). *News Inside* contains a compilation of journalism about new legal developments, prison programs, stories that inspire, criminal science reads, and

“Life Inside” stories, which readers could have a chance to write themselves. Produces *Inside Story*, a video series shown on facility televisions and tablets provided to incarcerated people. The series takes viewers inside Marshall Project stories, featuring interviews with journalists as they report on the criminal legal system and special guests who bring their lived experience of the system to the conversation.

Currently incarcerated people interested in receiving *News Inside* directly or requesting that we contact their facilities to provide *Inside Story* can write to the address below. Please include your full name, identification number, facility name and the facility’s mailing address in your request.

**News Inside Manager
The Marshall Project
156 West 56th Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10019**

NEW YORK CAMPAIGN FOR ALTERNATIVES TO ISOLATED CONFINEMENT (NYCAIC)

<https://nycaic.org>

Works to end solitary confinement for all people, promote alternatives proven to better protect people’s health and safety, and build on these changes to dismantle the racial injustices and punishment paradigm that underpin the entire incarceration system. Brings together people who have lived through solitary confinement, family members, concerned community members, lawyers, and individuals in the human rights, health, and faith communities throughout the state to #HALTsolitary confinement in NY prisons and jails. Visit the website for more information and join ongoing campaigns.

PRISON LEGAL NEWS

PO Box 1151, Lake Worth, FL 33460

Telephone: 561.360.2523

www.prisonlegalnews.org

An independent monthly magazine that provides review and analysis of incarcerated people's rights, court rulings, and news concerning criminal legal-related issues. Contact for information on pricing and how to subscribe.

PRISON POLICY INITIATIVE

PO Box 127, Northampton, MA 01061

www.prisonpolicy.org

Publishes data and research to expose the broader harm of mass criminalization and works on advocacy campaigns including fairer prison phone call rates and ending prison gerrymandering. Other resources include demand letters, policy recommendations, tools for legal action and advocacy, and a legal resources page.

RELEASE AGING PEOPLE IN PRISON PROJECT (RAPP)

135 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 631.885.3565

<https://rappcampaign.com>

A community organizing and advocacy organization working to end mass incarceration by promoting racial justice and the release of older people from prison. Visit the website for information about events and how you can get involved.

Also helps lead the People's Campaign for Parole Justice (visit www.parolejusticeny.com for more information) and a clemency campaign (visit <https://newyorkersforclemency.com> for more information), both of which work to help reunite families and end the punishment system.

SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY OVERSIGHT PROJECT (S.T.O.P.)

www.stopspying.org

Litigates and advocates to abolish local governments' systems of mass surveillance. Challenges both individual misconduct and broader systemic failures, crafts policies that balance new technologies and rights, and provides educational programming to impacted communities on how they can protect their rights. Also provides resources such as research reports and privacy toolkits, available on the website.

VOCAL-NY  

300 Douglass Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Telephone: 718.802.9540

<https://vocal-ny.org>

A statewide grassroots membership organization that builds power among low-income people affected by HIV/AIDS, the drug war, mass incarceration, and homelessness in order to create healthy and just communities through community organizing, leadership development, advocacy, direct services, participatory research, and direct action. Visit the website for more information on joining and events.

WORTH RISES

85 Delancey Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10002

<https://worthrises.org>

A nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to dismantling the prison industry and ending the exploitation of those it targets. Conducts research, collects data, and performs analysis. Organizes and leads campaigns that center on protecting and returning resources to directly-impacted communities.



Clean Slate Act

The Clean Slate Act took effect November 16th, 2024 and provides automatic civil sealing for eligible convictions. No application is required. The following is from www.cleanslateny.org.

A person's conviction will be automatically sealed under Clean Slate after a waiting period, which is eight years for a felony and three years for a misdemeanor. During this time, a person can have no new convictions. The waiting period begins on the sentencing date, or, if the person is incarcerated, after release.

Sex offenses, sexually violent offenses, and Class A felonies, except for drug-related convictions, are not eligible for sealing under the Clean Slate Act.

Once the waiting period is over, a conviction will be sealed if:

- The person is no longer under community supervision, including probation and parole.
- They have no pending criminal cases

Convictions sealed by Clean Slate will not appear on background checks by most employers, landlords, and educational institutions. However, sealed cases will remain visible to:

- Law enforcement, prosecutors, and the courts
- Hiring police and peace officers
- Gun licenses
- The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- Certain jobs regulated by the government, including: entities required by law to conduct a fingerprint-based background check; entities authorized by law to conduct a fingerprint-based background check because they work with children, adults who are elderly or have disabilities, or otherwise vulnerable people; and specified licenses for jobs overseen by the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

Education

NO ONE IS GOING TO GIVE YOU THE EDUCATION YOU NEED TO OVERTHROW THEM. NOBODY IS GOING TO TEACH YOU YOUR TRUE HISTORY, TEACH YOU YOUR TRUE HEROES, IF THEY KNOW THAT THAT KNOWLEDGE WILL HELP SET YOU FREE.

— ASSATA SHAKUR



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY PEDRO CIRILO

Adult Literacy, High School Equivalency (HSE), & English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

There are three levels of adult literacy classes:

- Beginning programs help adults learn to read and write.
- Intermediate programs help those who read below a sixth-grade level improve their reading and writing skills.
- Advanced programs assist people who read at a sixth- to eighth-grade level.

Sometimes literacy programs are called Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, while advanced adult literacy programs are often referred to as pre-High School Equivalency (pre-HSE). These focus on reading, writing, math, social science, and other subjects.

A High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma is the recognized alternative to a high school diploma. In New York State, there are four pathways for a person to earn an HSE diploma.

The **GED Test** is the current HSE exam in New York State. Passing subtest scores from the TASC from 2014 to 2021, and prior GED scores from 2002 to 2013, will continue to be applicable toward current HSE subtest requirements.

The GED Test includes four sections/subject tests:

- Reasoning Through Language Arts (RLA*)
- Mathematical Reasoning
- Science
- Social Studies

**The RLA includes reading and writing subject tests. If only the reading or the writing was previously passed, by taking the GED (2002–2013) or the TASC Test, the RLA must be taken in full.*

To qualify for an HSE diploma, testers need to score at least 145 on each subject test. The entire GED test (all four subject tests) takes about 7.5 hours to complete and tests do not have to be taken all at once.

The **National External Diploma Program (NEDP)** is a computer-based assessment program for out-of-school youth and adults ages 18 and over. The NEDP is not a test, but a self-paced assessment program where students work independently on assignments that cover a variety of academic subjects including reading, writing, math, and workforce readiness skills in life and work contexts. Students meet with an advisor every 1–2 weeks for one hour to review their progress. It is an alternative to the HSE test, especially for people who have test anxiety or find timed tests challenging, people who work or have other obligations that affect their ability to attend class, those who struggle with higher-level math, or those who have limited English proficiency.

The **College Credit Program** allows students to use earned college credits to obtain an HSE diploma. Candidates must be enrolled in a college program leading to a degree or certificate at an approved institution and must have earned 24 credits (or equivalent) in certain specified subjects.

The **Regents—HSE Exam Pathway** allows candidates to use passing scores on certain Regents Examinations in place of corresponding GED subject tests. Candidates who have passed Regents Examinations in all four core subject areas must still pass at least one GED subject test to earn an HSE diploma. Such candidates may take any GED subject they choose.

For more information on the GED test, along with information on the alternative pathways to earn an HSE diploma listed above, visit www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/high-school-equivalency-hse, write to the **NYS Education Department—HSE Office, 89 Washington Avenue, EBA 460, Albany, NY 12234**, or call **518.474.5906**.

Replacing lost HSE diplomas or transcripts

An HSE record holder (anyone who earned or is in pursuit of one of the eligible HSE pathways) can purchase duplicate official high school equivalency diplomas and/or transcripts online. Visit www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/high-school-equivalency-duplicate-diploma-and-or-transcript-requests for more information.

In order to replace a copy of your HSE diploma via mail, you must fill out the application found online at the website above and send: (1) the completed application; and (2) a certified check or money

order payable to the New York State Education Department (either \$5.00 for a copy of a transcript or \$10.00 for a copy of a diploma and transcript) to:

New York State Education Department—HSE Office
89 Washington Avenue, EBA 460, Albany, NY 12234

Do not send cash, personal checks, or international money orders. All fees are non-refundable. The turnaround time is 6–10 weeks from the time of receipt of the request form.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—FREE ENGLISH CLASSES

Telephone: 917.275.6975
www.nypl.org/events/classes/english

Offers free English classes in three 10-week cycles and a 4-week summer cycle for adults 18 and over. Classes are for beginner-, intermediate-, and advanced-level students. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes are for non-native speakers who want to improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. ABE classes are for English speakers who want to improve their reading and writing. English for Work classes are for intermediate and advanced English speakers looking for work or a career change. Registration is required for classes listed above. We Speak NYC English Conversation Class are informal, conversational classes for intermediate and advanced English learners who want to sharpen their speaking and listening skills. Classes are in person at select library branches and no registration is required. For more information and to register for classes, visit the website or your local library.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—ADULT LEARNING CENTERS

10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238
Telephone: 718.622.4460
www.bklynlibrary.org/adult-learning/learning-centers

Provides free Adult Basic Education (ABE) for beginning adult readers and writers with the help of trained volunteer tutors. Offers free preparation classes for those who would like to finish their high school equivalency (HSE) diploma through one of the following HSE pathways in New York State: National External Diploma Program (NEDP); Fast Track classes (for those who need to pass 1–2 subject tests to earn their HSE diploma); GED exam in Spanish or English; an industry recognized credential in food safety, digital literacy, or medical billing; or practice English speaking skills while working toward earning an HSE diploma in Spanish. Also offers English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): integrated English and certification classes, Business English, beginner ESOL, computer literacy classes, citizenship preparation, and informational workshops. In addition, provides case management and wrap-around services for all students. Loans laptops and hotspots to enrolled students and others with a library card. Visit the website for class schedules and registration information.

QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—ADULT LEARNER PROGRAM & NEW AMERICANS PROGRAM

Adult Learner Program

89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432

Telephone: 718.990.0754

www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/adult-learners

Provides multiple services including ESOL classes for students ages 17 and over at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels, as well as English conversation groups. Also offers Adult Basic Education classes in basic math, reading, and writing skills; assistance in obtaining a High School Diploma through pre-HSE and HSE classes; citizenship preparation; technology training; and referrals to social services with trained case managers. Offers the GED exam at select Adult Learning Centers and pre-HSE classes for students 16–24 years old. Visit the website or email alpref@queenslibrary.org for more information.

New Americans Program

89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432

Telephone: 718.990.0894

www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/new-americans

Offers free workshops in the most widely spoken immigrant languages of Queens. Informational workshops related to new immigrants' acculturation are offered on topics such as citizenship, job training, advice on helping children learn, starting a business, health, and social services. Also provides free readings, concerts, and workshops celebrating the literary, performing, and folk arts of immigrants from Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Offers referrals for immigration cases. For more information visit the website or email napref@queenslibrary.org.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (HSE)

The NYS Education Department—HSE Office
89 Washington Avenue, EBA 460, Albany, NY 12234
Telephone: 518.474.5906

www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/high-school-equivalency-hse

Provides information on the pathways to a High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma. Application forms, eligibility criteria, documentation requirements, test sites, test requirements, and more are available on the website.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—ADULT EDUCATION

Telephone: 646.481.8227

www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/adult-education

Offers free basic education, ESOL, and HSE test preparation for adults ages 21 and over who do not have a US High School diploma or equivalency (HSE). Also offers career and technical education (CTE) classes. All classes are tuition-free and taught by certified teachers. Students may be required to pay associated fees for textbooks, certification exams, and/or uniforms for specific classes. Call for a list of classes, locations, and to register and determine placement.

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE—ADULT EDUCATION & TRAINING PROGRAM

Gould Hall, Room 410, 2155 University Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453
Telephone: 718.289.5834

www.bcc.cuny.edu/academics/student-success-programs/adult-education-training-program

Provides free services to adults who are seeking to improve their English language skills (ESOL), get a high school diploma (HSE), and to those who are displaced because of loss of income (DHP). Students receive academic instruction and counseling, along with college/training information and follow-up. Call to schedule an appointment. Registration takes approximately three hours, and includes testing for appropriate class placement.

CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL—ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM

Provides free ESOL classes. Job development, workshops, and support are also available to students.

See the full listing for Chinese-American Planning Council on [page 259](#).

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)—ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM

www.cuny.edu/academics/academic-programs/model-programs/cuny-college-transition-programs/adult-literacy

Provides free adult literacy, HSE preparation, and ESOL classes for people ages 19 and over. Visit the website for a contact list of campus programs, for more information on classes offered, and registration.

EXPONENTS

Certified instructors provide assistance with vocational assessment, HSE exam preparation, and ongoing educational/vocational counseling. One-on-one educational support services are also available.

See the full listing for Exponents on [page 30](#).

GODDARD RIVERSIDE—OPTIONS CENTER

352 West 110th Street, New York, NY 10025

Telephone: 212.678.4667

<https://goddard.org>

Offers assistance to juniors and seniors at NYC public/parochial high schools and young adults and adults in NYC with a high school diploma or TASC/GED applying to college and other post-secondary education options. Help with financial aid, scholarships, internships, essay-writing, portfolios, campus visits, school supplies, transportation, transfers, and re-enrollment provided. Call to make an appointment and for walk-in hours.

IMANI HOUSE, INC.—ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM

76-A 5th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Telephone: 718.638.2059

www.imanihouse.org

Offers free small-group and one-on-one classes in basic literacy, ESOL, HSE test preparation, pre-HSE, and math tutoring. Call for availability and registration.

JOHN JAY COLLEGE—INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND OPPORTUNITY—PATHWAYS TO GED PROGRAM

555 West 57th Street, Suite 603, New York, NY 10019

<https://justiceandopportunity.org>

The Pathways to GED program offers people with criminal legal system involvement classes to earn their High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma. Enrolled students will receive monthly MetroCards, daily meals, monetary milestone incentives, a rented laptop, and WiFi cards to support success. Visit the website for more information, including the recruitment period.

LITERACY PARTNERS

75 Maiden Lane, Suite 1102, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.725.9200

<https://literacypartners.org>

Offers free English-for-parents classes and Spanish-language parenting programs for people with children ages 0–7, basic reading for all adults, and HSE prep for Bronx Community College students. Classes are online and in person, depending on the program. Contact for schedules and registration information.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW (OBT)



An employment-training center for adults and youth providing basic education, HSE preparation, job training, job placement, and follow-up services.

See the full listing for OBT on [page 380](#).

PER SCHOLAS INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 718.991.8400

<https://perscholas.org>

804 East 138th Street, #2, Bronx, NY 10454

630 Flushing Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11206

Provides tuition-free technology-education training and career-placement services for unemployed or underemployed adults ages 18 and over interested in a career in technology. Courses include IT support, Cybersecurity, Software Engineering, and AWS re/Start. All courses include professional development training. After completing the training, graduates are eligible to test for professional certifications, including CompTIA A+, CompTIA CySA+, AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner, and Google IT Support Professional Certificate. Students must possess a high school diploma or HSE, US Work Authorization, basic reading and math skills, and live within the five boroughs of NYC. Visit the website for satellite classroom locations, additional eligibility information, and to apply.

UNION SETTLEMENT—ADULT EDUCATION

237 East 104th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10029
Telephone: 212.828.6017
www.unionsettlement.org

Offers free HSE exam preparation and ESOL classes for people ages 18 and over, and career-training classes for people ages 21 and over. Instruction is offered in English, but offers HSE classes in Spanish. Classes are offered weekdays during daytime and evening hours. Call for class schedules. Provides referrals for other services such as legal aid, housing, and emergency food assistance.

Computer Literacy

Learning how to use a computer and navigate the internet is important. It can help one search for a job, find information on just about any topic imaginable, meet new people based on common interests, correspond with family and friends, become better informed about health issues, find out where and when a movie is playing, reserve a library book, look up business information or government forms, make travel plans, and so much more.

All three public library systems (The New York Public Library,

serving Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island; Brooklyn Public Library; and Queens Public Library) offer free courses. Below are the descriptions of the computer-training programs offered by the three public library systems.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—TECHCONNECT

Telephone: 917.275.6975

www.nypl.org/techconnect

Offers free computer-training workshops and technology classes for adults of all skill levels. Classes include internet basics, Microsoft Office, video chatting, coding courses to build websites and apps, online job searching, and more. Visit the website for a schedule of classes and registration information.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)

www.bklynlibrary.org/calendar

Offers free workshops including Computer Basics, Internet Searching, and Introduction to Microsoft Word. Visit the website for a schedule of classes and registration information.

QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY

www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/technology-training/tech-workshops

Offers free instruction in computer skills and certification. Introductory courses include Computer Mouse and Keyboard Practice, Smartphone Basics, Using the Internet, Creating and Using Email, and Microsoft Office Basics (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). Intermediate and advanced classes include Microsoft Office Specialist Certification prep, job search using free tools, as well as web development basics. Also lends tablets and laptops at select locations. For information on Microsoft Office and Northstar Digital Literacy certifications, email QB-programs@queenslibrary.org. For

information on lendable technology, visit www.queenslibrary.org/about-us/services/Lendable-Technology. Visit the calendar on the website for a schedule of classes and registration information.

Continuing Education

BARD PRISON INITIATIVE (BPI)—BARD MICROCOLLEGES

Telephone: 845.785.7308

<https://microcollege.bard.edu>

Offers full scholarship, accredited college programs where students earn a Bard College Associate in Arts degree by attending classes at one of two locations: Brooklyn Public Library's Central Library at Grand Army Plaza or the New York Public Library's Countee Cullen branch in Harlem. Academic advisors help keep students on track with their degree, and support is offered by tutors, librarians, and BPI's director of NYC programs. Call or visit the website for more information including the admissions and application process.

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE—FUTURE NOW

Gould Residence Hall, 2155 University Avenue, 5th Floor, Bronx, NY 10453

Telephone: 718.289.5852

www.bcc.cuny.edu/Future-Now

Offers free HSE and vocational training classes, student counseling and career exploration, and college preparation and enrollment services to students ages 17–24. Students must be a NYC resident, pass the Future Now placement test, and attend an interview and orientation.

COLLEGE & COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP (CCF)

475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1626, New York, NY 10115

Telephone: 646.380.7777

www.collegeandcommunity.org

Supports women with criminal legal system involvement in pursuing higher education or certification programs by offering a sisterhood community, resources, advocacy opportunities, financial assistance, and career guidance. For more information, including eligibility, email hello@collegeandcommunity.org.

COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL—PARALEGAL PATHWAYS INITIATIVE

<https://change-center.law.columbia.edu/research-projects/paralegal-pathways-initiative>

A 12-week training program, providing skills-based legal training and professional mentorship opportunities to formerly incarcerated people in preparation for future legal careers. The course begins in mid-January and concludes at the end of April. Topics covered include legal research and writing, legal ethics, client interviewing, professional development, and an overview of civil litigation and discovery. Applicants must be ages 18 and over, reside in NYC, have been formerly incarcerated and at least one year post-release, demonstrate a genuine interest in the legal field, commit to attending an in-person two-hour class one night a week for 12 weeks and additional programming and workshops, commit to contributing to a collaborative learning environment, and complete an interview. Familiarity with LexisNexis and/or Westlaw is not required, but preferred. Applications are open every year from September/October to mid-November. Visit the website for more information and to apply.

**CUNY SCHOOL OF LAW—FORMERLY INCARCERATED LAW
STUDENT ADVOCACY ASSOCIATION**  

2 Court Square, Long Island City, NY 11101
www.law.cuny.edu

Provides information for those interested in attending law school after incarceration. Offers support when applying to law school, such as letters of support for admission and supplementary LSAT tutoring. Once enrolled in CUNY School of Law, functions as an affinity group to foster connections within the student body and the larger legal profession, and shares resources for students who identify as formerly incarcerated. For more information contact filsaa@mail.law.cuny.edu.

LEHMAN COLLEGE—REENTRY@LEHMAN  

250 Bedford Park Blvd. West, Bronx, NY 10468
www.lehman.edu/re-entry-at-lehman

Offers support and resources for Lehman students who have been impacted by the criminal legal system, including those who have experienced incarceration and those who have family members who are currently or formerly incarcerated. Provides help with academic enrollment, registration, financial aid, and referrals to campus and community-based resources and partners that address specific needs such as housing, employment, legal services, personal finances, and scholarship information. For more information contact penny.prince@lehman.cuny.edu.

**JOHN JAY COLLEGE—INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND
OPPORTUNITY** 

Mailing Address
524 West 59th Street, Suite 609B, New York, NY 10019
<https://justiceandopportunity.org>

The College Initiative provides academic counseling and support

for college enrollment and retention to formerly incarcerated and court-involved individuals. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalency. First-year students are paired with a peer mentor to aid in a successful transition to college and matched with an academic counselor who will support them in overcoming educational barriers.

Career Pathways promotes access to training and employment, with a special focus on creating pathways to careers in the human services field. Tech 101 is an entry-level course designed to introduce students to the fundamental technology skills needed in the workforce. The Navigator Certificate curriculum combines the theory and ethics of human services with development of professional skills.

More information is available online including eligibility, applications, and program start dates and length. People currently incarcerated can write for information about programs and other resources in the community.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (SUNY)

SUNY Welcome Center

116 East 55th Street, New York, NY 10022

Telephone: 212.364.5821

www.suny.edu/attend/suny-in-nyc

Consists of 64 academic institutions throughout NYS, including universities, undergraduate colleges, technology institutes, and community colleges. Offers online degree and certificate programs. The SUNY Application Viewbook describes the campuses and programs offered and can be downloaded or ordered from the website. The Welcome Center provides one-on-one and group counseling on college selection and financial aid, assists with the admissions application, and maintains a computer lab for completing and submitting online applications. Call for walk-in hours.

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)

University Offices

205 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 800.286.9937 / Admissions: 212.997.2869

www.cuny.edu

Consists of 25 colleges and institutions throughout NYC. Contact to request course schedules for specific colleges. Also offers adult education classes including ESOL and pre-HSE, HSE, and college-transition preparation. Call to speak with a college admissions counselor or visit the website for information.

For information on support services available for formerly incarcerated students, visit www.cuny.edu/civics/support-student-conviction-records.

Below outlines the basic steps for applying to an undergraduate program at CUNY, found online at www.cuny.edu/admissions/undergraduate/apply.

Determine your college choices and academic programs

You can apply to multiple campuses using a single application. You should determine your college choices and academic programs before starting your application. The priority application deadline for Fall is February 1 and Spring is September 15.

EDUCATION

60 Create a CUNY Application Account or log into your CUNYfirst account

The CUNY Application page can be found online at www.cuny.edu/admissions/undergraduate/apply/cuny-application.

Fill out the online application

You will be presented with several pages of questions to complete. Complete the questions on each page. Freshmen applicants can select up to six college choices, while Transfer applicants can select up to four college choices. All applicants will receive an admission decision from each college listed on their application.

Pay your application fee

After you have completed each section of the application, you will be prompted to pay your application fee. You can pay online or

by mail. The application fee is \$65 for Freshman applicants and \$70 for Transfer applicants. The application fee is non-refundable. Current CUNY students are exempt from paying the transfer application fee. Veterans of the United States Military Service, those currently on Active Duty, or members of the National Guard or Reserves may obtain an application fee waiver.

Submit your application

After you submit your application, you will be able to print or download a copy of your Application Summary. You can find your CUNYfirst ID number (an 8-digit number) on your Application Summary. You will need your CUNYfirst ID number to submit supporting documents.

Submit your supporting documents

All documents are to be mailed to the University Application Processing Center. You will need your CUNYfirst ID number when submitting supporting documents. Below is a general list of documents you will need to submit:

- High school transcript or High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma
- College, university and/or proprietary school transcript (transfers only)
- Standardized test scores
- Recommendations, personal statements, and other supporting materials
- Supplemental application for selective programs

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)—CUNY FATHERHOOD ACADEMY (CFA)

www.cuny.edu/academics/academic-programs/model-programs/cuny-fatherhood-academy

A free program for unemployed and underemployed fathers ages 18–30. One track provides help preparing for the High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma exam. The second track provides college prep. Services include tutoring, workshops on parenting, job readiness, and more. Students get MetroCards and stipends. Classes are held at Hostos Community College (Bronx), LaGuardia Community College (Queens), and Kingsborough Community

College (Brooklyn). Visit the website for contacts and more information.

Financial Aid

Pell and TAP Grants Reinstated for Incarcerated Individuals

At the end of 2020, federal legislation was passed to restore Pell funding to all incarcerated individuals by the fall of 2023. In April 2022, the New York State Legislature repealed the ban on the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) for incarcerated New Yorkers.

The following information is from resources available at <https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/pell-restoration-for-people-in-prison> and www.hesc.ny.gov/tap-incarcerated-students-faq.

Pell Grants

Pell Grants are federal financial aid awarded to low-income college students who have not already earned a bachelor's or graduate degree. The maximum award is roughly \$7,000 a year, but the amount depends on your financial need, the cost of the program, and your status as a full- or part-time student.

You cannot apply for a Pell Grant unless there is an approved prison education program (PEP) at your facility. PEP is a confusing term as some college in prison programs use this term in their name, but that does not necessarily mean that they are eligible for Pell Grant funds.

There are many steps in the application and approval process for the college/university to receive PEP standing, including the approval of the corrections agency that governs the facility along with meeting accreditation standards. **This means that the timeline for new college programs in prison to become Pell eligible may be long, including for print-based correspondence programs.**

If you are accepted to a PEP program, you fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. You should contact the education department at your facility to find out whether a Pell-eligible program is available. **Do not fill out and submit the FAFSA on your own or have someone on the outside submit it online on**

your behalf. Wait until you are asked by your college to do so. Any money from the Pell grant goes directly to the college on behalf of the student.

It is also important to think about any long-term goals you may have for your education/career as there is a maximum amount of Federal Pell Grant funds you can receive over your lifetime. For example, if you want to earn a bachelor's degree in engineering in the future, it might not make sense to use Pell to pay for an associate's degree in liberal arts.

At the time of publication, there is no comprehensive list of colleges and universities that have been approved as PEPs. It is advised for people who are currently incarcerated to speak to a member of the facility's education staff for the most up to date information.

If you are released, you may use Pell Grants for any college program you're accepted to as long as you otherwise qualify (meaning your income is low enough) and haven't reached the maximum amount of Pell funds.

Pell can only be used for undergraduate education. If you have a certificate or associate's degree, you can still use Pell for a bachelor's degree. However, you can't use Pell for a second bachelor's degree or for graduate programs (education beyond a bachelor's degree like a master's or Ph.D.).

Only US citizens and eligible noncitizens can use Pell Grants.

If there are other facilities in your state that are operating college programs, you might be able to request a transfer.

You aren't eligible for Pell Grants if you have a defaulted loan. The three ways to get out of default are by (1) repaying the defaulted loan in full, (2) rehabilitating your loan(s), or (3) consolidating your loan(s). If you need help with your defaulted loan, you will need to contact the holder of your defaulted loan. If you don't know who your loan servicer is, call the **US Education Department's Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 800.433.3243.**

It is strongly advised that you receive help from a friend or loved one, or someone working in education/programs at your facility for

resolving a defaulted loan, due to lack of communication via mail and length of phone calls.

For more information about Pell Grants call **FSAIC** at **800.433.3243**.

To sign up for a print version of *College Inside*, a biweekly newsletter about the future of postsecondary education in prisons, write to **Open Campus, 2460 17th Avenue #1015, Santa Cruz, CA 95062**, or visit www.opencampusmedia.org/college-inside.

Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

The New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) helps eligible New York residents pay tuition at approved schools in New York State. Incarcerated applicants are required to meet the same eligibility requirements as non-incarcerated applicants. TAP awards can be made to incarcerated students in either approved degree or approved non-degree programs in accordance with NYS Education Law. All students in degree programs must be matriculated and maintain Good Academic Standing requirements regardless of their incarceration status. Students must fulfill credit requirements of 12 or more credits to receive up to the maximum TAP award, and students enrolled in 6 to 11 credits will receive a prorated award.

Incarcerated students who are undocumented and deemed eligible to apply for financial aid through the NYS DREAM Act application process may apply for TAP.

The online application is only completed by College Financial Aid Officers on behalf of incarcerated students who have been accepted into a college education program.

Money awarded to a student through TAP, or any other NYS financial aid program, is to be applied to tuition costs only and never directly refunded to students. All unspent funds will be returned to New York State regardless of the student's incarceration status.

US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)

Telephone: 800.433.3243

<https://studentaid.gov>

The application required for most federal, state, and college financial aid programs. The website describes eligibility requirements and gives step-by-step instructions. Provides resources and information on types of aid, preparing for college, and more.

NYS HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION

99 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12255

www.hesc.ny.gov

Administers Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and other New York State grants and scholarships. Provides information on a variety of financial aid resources and additional planning information. Visit the website to schedule an appointment.

FINAID

<https://finaid.org>

An online resource that provides a comprehensive summary of financial aid information, advice, and tools. Describes scholarships, fellowships, grants, loans, and other assistance available to students. Includes a glossary of financial aid terms and online calculators for estimating college cost and financial needs.

PRISON SCHOLAR FUND

1752 NW Market Street, #953, Seattle, WA 98107

www.prison scholars.org/what-we-do/for-prospective-scholars

Provides education and employment assistance to currently and formerly incarcerated people. Incarcerated students who are

interested should send an application request by mail with a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope (SASE) enclosed.

AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND

8333 Greenwood Blvd., Denver, CO 80221
Telephone: 800.776.3863 or 303.426.8900
<https://collegefund.org>

Awards scholarships to full-time students at accredited nonprofit colleges and universities, tribal and mainstream. Provides programming to improve Native student access to higher education. The website includes handbooks on financial preparation for colleges as well as links for fellowships and grants.

ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

1850 M Street NW, Suite 245, Washington, DC 20036
Telephone: 877.808.7032 or 202.986.6892
<https://apiascholars.org>

Awards scholarships to Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students across the US and Pacific Islands. The website includes additional information on resources and opportunities including scholarships, an emergency fund, programs, services, and more.

HISPANIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

www.hsf.net

Provides scholarships and services designed to give students full access to college education opportunities. Scholarship information, applications, guides to filling out forms, and other resources are available online.

SHAWN CARTER FOUNDATION—SCHOLARSHIP FUND

<https://shawncartersf.com>

Awards individuals facing economic hardship scholarships toward pursuing an education at institutions of higher learning. Visit the website for more information on eligibility requirements and how to apply.

UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND (UNCF)

1805 7th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001

Telephone: 800.331.2244

<https://uncf.org>

Awards scholarships, internships, and fellowships to minority students to attend college. Visit the website for information and applications for various scholarships and their deadlines for submission.

College Programs in Prison

The following are college programs located in facilities throughout New York State. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of all programs. If your facility is not listed here, talk to someone working in education/programs about available opportunities.

BARD COLLEGE—BARD PRISON INITIATIVE (BPI)

Facilities: Albion, Coxsackie, Eastern, Fishkill, Green Haven, Taconic, and Woodbourne

Degrees: Associate in Arts and Bachelor of Arts

PO Box 5000, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504

Telephone: 845.758.7308

<https://bpi.bard.edu>

Offers full-time enrollment in a comprehensive liberal arts and science curriculum. The associate degree admission process includes an essay and interview, happens on-site at the seven facilities where BPI operates, and is open to anyone with a high school diploma or equivalent. Students who complete requirements for the Bard associate degree are eligible to apply to the bachelor's degree program. As students approach release, they are eligible for reentry workshops and advising. After returning home, students are able to enroll in a six-week ConnectED workshop series that comes with a stipend and covers topics such as financial and digital literacy, wellness, love and relationships, resume building, and more. Students and alumni returning home are also provided ongoing individualized support in the areas of housing, continuing education, and career development based out of the BPI NYC office or upstate. BPI partners with other institutions to offer paid fellowships through which alumni can gain work experience and professional connections in a variety of fields.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY—CORNELL PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAM (CPEP)

Facilities: Auburn, Cayuga, Elmira, Five Points

Degrees: Associate in Arts with concentration in Social Sciences and the Humanities (from SUNY), Certificate in Liberal Arts (from Cornell University)

300 Kennedy Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853

Telephone: 607.255.9091

<https://cpep.cornell.edu>

Offers a comprehensive liberal arts curriculum. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalency, must be in good disciplinary standing, and must pass a rigorous entrance exam and academic evaluation. Preparatory classes are often encouraged for those who pass the entrance exam. Associate degrees are awarded through SUNY Cayuga Community College and SUNY Corning Community College. Students are provided academic advisement. Also organizes guest lecture series, debate team, and the Writers Bloc literary journal, which features poetry and short stories written by students.

CORNELL ACADEMIC REENTRY SERVICES (CARS)

Offers reentry services and support to current or former students of the Cornell Prison Education Program (CPEP). Designed to aid in the successful transition of CPEP alumni, provides housing and employment assistance, benefit navigation services, academic support, computers, limited “coming-home” funds, and other services. Returning CPEP students can contact CARS at **Cornell Academic Reentry Services, 300 Kennedy Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853** or call **607.351.7462**.

HUDSON LINK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN PRISON



PO Box 862, Ossining, NY 10562

Telephone: 914.941.0794

<https://hudsonlink.org>

Acts as the administrator of a variety of college programs in five different correctional facilities by partnering with six higher education institutions. An academic coordinator is available at each of the facilities to provide academic advisement and help with reentry planning for students.

Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalency and be in good disciplinary standing within their facility. All potential students are required to take any necessary placement exams for the college that will be administering the courses and granting credits. Once accepted into the program, students must agree to the rules of the program to be an upstanding student.

Anyone interested in the college program should write a letter of interest to the facility’s Hudson Link Academic Coordinator, who will explain the admissions process.

Offers a Pre-College Program to those who are eligible for the college program but may not yet be prepared for college-level work.

Also provides supportive services for alumni post-release, including transitional housing in Westchester County. The Transitional Services Director, Reentry Case Manager, and Finish Line Coordinator provide case management, scholarships and support

for academic and vocational programs, job-readiness skills including resume writing, job search assistance, interview attire, laptops, professional mentoring, and internship opportunities. Any alumni interested in accessing Hudson Link’s transitional services should write a detailed letter of interest addressed to the Transitional Services department.

Green Haven Correctional Facility

Degrees offered: Associate of Applied Science in Individual Studies

College partners: Columbia-Greene Community College

Greene Correctional Facility

Degrees offered: Associate of Applied Science in Individual Studies

College partners: Columbia-Greene Community College

Shawangunk Correctional Facility

Degrees offered: Associate in Individual Studies, Bachelor’s in Social Science

College partners: SUNY Ulster, Mount Saint Mary College

Sing Sing Correctional Facility

Degrees offered: Associate in Liberal Arts and Sciences, Bachelor’s in Behavioral Science

College partners: Mercy College, Columbia University

Taconic Correctional Facility

Degrees offered: Associate in Social Sciences, Bachelor’s in Politics and Human Rights

College partners: Marymount Manhattan College, Columbia University

JOHN JAY COLLEGE—INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND OPPORTUNITY—PRISON-TO-COLLEGE PATHWAYS (P2CP)



Facility: Otisville

524 West 59th Street, Suite 603 BMW, New York, NY 10019

<https://justiceandopportunity.org/educational-pathways/prison-to-college-pathways>

Offers a range of accredited, credit-bearing college courses in English, sociology, anthropology, mathematics, and other liberal arts disciplines, and guarantees all passing students a spot in a CUNY college upon release. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalency, and a minimum of 1.5 years to potential release for the ability to complete at least two semesters once accepted into the program. Upon release, students can work with the Institute's College Initiative program for support while completing their degrees in the community.

MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN COLLEGE—BEDFORD HILLS COLLEGE PROGRAM (BHCP) 

Facility: Bedford

Degree: Associate of Arts in Social Sciences, Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, Bachelor's in Politics and Human Rights

221 East 71st Street, New York, NY 10021

Telephone: 212.517.0400 or 914.241.3100 x4514

www.mmm.edu/prison-education/bedford-hills-college-program

An open-admissions program with a curriculum concentration on the social sciences. A high school diploma or HSE is required. Classes range from freshman to senior. Runs three semesters per year with 15–18 credit courses offered per semester. A computer lab, an academic library, peer and civilian tutoring, and on-site academic advising are available to students.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY—PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAM (NYU PEP) 

Facility: Wallkill

Degree: Associate of Arts in Liberal Studies

726 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10003

<https://prisoneducation.nyu.edu>

Offers a wide range of credit-bearing courses and transferable college credits to people incarcerated at Wallkill Correctional

Facility. Courses run year-round at the facility and are taught primarily in person by NYU faculty. Runs an annual admissions process each summer. Individuals at Walkkill who would like to apply for admission to the college program must submit a written application and have a high school diploma or equivalency. Does not consider a prospective student's conviction or DOCCS disciplinary record when making admissions decisions. Admitted students are provided academic advising, peer mentorship, tutoring, and reentry student services designed to provide holistic support in navigating the transition home. Non-degree programming for students has included an annual creative writing publication, technology literacy training, book clubs, performing arts, and more.

NORTH COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE (NCCC)—SECOND CHANCE PELL PROGRAM

Facilities: Adirondack, Bare Hill, Franklin, FCI-Ray Brook

Degrees: Associate of Applied Science in Entrepreneurship

Management, Associate of Applied Science in Individual Studies,

Associate of Arts Liberal Arts: Humanities and Social Science

23 Santanoni Avenue, Saranac Lake, NY 12983

Telephone: 518.891.2915

www.nccc.edu

Offers credit-bearing courses and transferable college credits in three programs that focus on the liberal arts, business, and human services curriculums. Individuals who are interested in applying should send a letter to the Education Department at the facility where they are located and address it to NCCC—Second Chance PELL program staff. Applicants will need to fill out an application packet, including a FAFSA form, and must have a high school diploma or equivalency, be Pell-eligible, and be in good disciplinary standing in the facility. Applicants who have previously attended college are eligible as long as they do not have prior student loans in default. Placement tests are required before taking composition and mathematics courses. Students are provided academic advising, some basic tutoring (including peer tutoring), and study skills development. Admissions sessions are conducted in preparation for students to start fall, spring, or summer semesters. Students

who have prior college credits within the last 10 years can arrange for an official transcript to be sent to NCCC for evaluation and transfer of credits.

RISING HOPE, INC.—PROGRAM IN MINISTRY AND HUMAN SERVICES

Facilities: Fishkill, Sing Sing, Woodbourne

260 King's Mall Ct. #124, Kingston, NY 12401

Telephone: 914.276.7848

www.risinghopeinc.org

A not-for-profit educational organization, offering a post-secondary course of study designed to prepare students for college and work in the helping professions. College-level courses are taught in select correctional facilities by volunteers. The program consists of two semesters, each 15 weeks in length, with classes multiple evenings per week. Courses are not credit bearing and do not apply to the Limited Credit Time Allowance. Limited workshops are offered when available depending on location and facilitator availability.

Alumni have had success transferring credit from Rising Hope classes into college programs, particularly at SUNY and CUNY schools. The number of courses accepted depends on which degree program the student has chosen. Alumni who apply to SUNY Empire State College have their application fee waived.

The program is open to people of any or no faith tradition, and there is no proselytizing. Individuals who are interested must complete an application process including a written essay and an interview. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalency and commit to the entire program. Upon release, students are provided support, including alumni gatherings and mentorship. Alumni can apply for assistance such as MetroCard transportation upon initial release, professional clothing, or a laptop computer.

Housing

EXILE IS MORE THAN A GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPT. YOU CAN BE IN EXILE IN YOUR HOMELAND, IN YOUR OWN HOUSE, IN A ROOM.

— MAHMOUD DARWISH



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY R. RODRIGUEZ

Shelters

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES (DHS) 

Emergency Information Line: 311

www.nyc.gov/dhs

Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for emergency shelter needs.

At the time of publication, the legal right to shelter in NYC stands, but a temporary settlement allows the city to limit newly arrived adult asylum-seekers' shelter stays to 30 days, and to 60 days for younger adults. It is important to stay up-to-date with any changes. More information can be found on [page 254](#).

Housing for individuals convicted of a sex offense

It can be difficult to find housing providers that meet the stipulations for both parole and Strict and Intensive Supervision and Treatment (SIST) for a person registered as a sex offender. Consequently, reentry organizations in NYC face challenging obstacles in connecting such individuals with housing providers. While some organizations do work with registered sex offenders, each individual is evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and successful placement in supportive housing takes time and is limited. For these reasons, those in need of housing immediately upon reentry are recommended to go directly to **30th Street Intake**, listed on [page 77](#).

For counseling services for individuals convicted of a sex offense, please see the listings for **Mustard Seed Counseling Services** ([page 154](#)), **New York Counseling for Change** ([page 154](#)), and **Shiloh Consulting** ([page 155](#)).

Intake Centers for Single Adults

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES (DHS)—
INTAKE CENTERS 

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/dhs/shelter/singleadults/single-adults.page

DHS considers a single adult to be any person ages 18 and over, who seeks shelter independently, unaccompanied by other adults or minors. Homeless individuals who have been in a shelter within the past 12 months should go to that shelter. Otherwise, they should go to an intake center. These centers are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. Interpreter assistance is available for people who do not speak English. The following forms of ID are helpful during the intake process (though not required): any form of ID with a picture and proof of age (such as a driver's license, state-issued ID, passport or visa, welfare card, or Green Card), Social Security card, Medicaid card (if available), and the individual's most recent pay stub (if working).

Under DHS policy, all people have the right to be housed according to the gender they identify as. Shelter workers are required to call individuals by the name and pronouns they go by and to place them in a shelter that matches their gender, regardless of what their ID documents say. For more information, or for assistance if experiencing discrimination in the shelter system, contact the **Sylvia Rivera Law Project** at **212.337.8550**.

What to expect

Upon visiting an intake center, individuals will be assessed for their unique needs by social services and administrative staff, and assigned to a shelter with experience in addressing those needs.

DHS programs include counseling, case management, employment training, mental health services, specialized services for veterans, substance use treatment, and programs for older people. Social workers, employment specialists, housing/vocational counselors, and health coordinators work with clients with the goal to achieve self-sufficiency.

Adults entering the shelter system are expected to work with shelter staff toward this goal. Clients will be asked to follow an Independent Living Plan (ILP), participate in programs that meet their needs, and follow shelter guidelines. Failing to abide by the rules may have consequences, including but not limited to the temporary discontinuance of shelter services.

30TH STREET INTAKE FOR MEN

400-430 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016
Telephone: 311

Intake shelter for men. Open 24 hours, 7 days a week.

FRANKLIN SHELTER AND INTAKE CENTER FOR WOMEN



1122 Franklin Avenue, Bronx, NY 10456
Telephone: 311

Intake and assessment shelter for women. Open 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Drop-In Centers for Single Adults

CAMBA—THE GATHERING PLACE

2402 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11233
Telephone: 718.385.8726

<https://camba.org/programs/drop-in-center-respite-program>

A drop-in center for single people ages 18 and over. Services include three meals a day; shower/laundry facilities; access to clothing, mail, and phone services; recreational activities; case management services and entitlement assistance; comprehensive medical and mental health services; and referrals to treatment resources. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

GRAND CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIAL SERVICES CORPORATION—MAINCHANCE DROP-IN CENTER



120 East 32nd Street, New York, NY 10016

Telephone: 212.883.0680 x101

www.grandcentralneighborhood.org/services/mainchance-drop-in-center

Provides chairs on-site for single adults ages 18 and over, although families may drop in for meals. Free showers are available Mon–Fri 8:30am–10:30am. Also provides medical services, social work, buses to faith-based organizations, three meals a day, donated clothing and toiletries, housing vouchers, and help for active clients seeking permanent housing. Food pantry on the second Wednesday of every month; check website for hours. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

PROJECT HOSPITALITY

<https://projecthospitality.org>

Main Office: 100 Park Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10302

Telephone: 718.448.1544

Drop-in Center: 150 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, NY 10301

Telephone: 718.720.0079

Provides overnight chairs (no beds) to single adults ages 24 and over. Morning drop-in is recommended. Offers referrals to mental health services, alcohol and substance use treatment services, legal services, benefits application, and more. Runs soup kitchens and food pantries; contact for locations and operating hours.

URBAN PATHWAYS—OLIVIERI DROP-IN CENTER

257 West 30th Street, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 844.705.0004

<https://urbanpathways.org/locations/the-olivieri-drop-in-center>

Registered clients can receive on-site 24-hour services including meals, clothing, and showers. Also offers case management, crisis intervention, housing placement, and referrals to medical, mental health, and rehabilitation services. Drop-in between 4:30pm–5pm for one overnight chair. Call for intake information.


Securing Shelter for Homeless Families

NYC's shelter system is designed to provide temporary emergency shelter to families with no other housing options available to them. Before being placed in a shelter, a family must be found eligible.

In order for a family to be eligible, DHS must verify that the family is in immediate need of temporary emergency shelter. DHS will conduct an investigation to determine whether there is any other safe and appropriate place for the family to stay, even temporarily. To aid the investigation, individuals should provide any documents that will help investigators understand why they are homeless. Examples include eviction papers, a marshal's 72-hour notice, letters from landlords or managing agents, letters from people the individual used to live with, and documents from doctors or other professionals showing that a former apartment is no longer live-able.

Families with children

DHS considers families with children to be the following households: families with children younger than 21 years of age, individual pregnant people, and families with a pregnant person. All families with children must apply for shelter at the DHS Prevention Assistance and Temporary Housing (PATH) intake center.

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES (DHS)—
PREVENTION ASSISTANCE & TEMPORARY HOUSING
(PATH) **

151 East 151st Street, Bronx, NY 10451

Telephone: 718.503.6400

www.nyc.gov/site/dhs/shelter/families/families-with-children-applying.page

All families with children must apply for shelter at the PATH intake center. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. Processes applications Mon–Fri 9–5. Interpreter assistance is available for individuals who do not speak English.

All families who are applying for shelter at PATH must have proper identification for all members of their household, such as:

- Any form of ID with a picture and proof of age, such as a welfare ID card, Green Card, driver's license, passport or visa, IDNYC, or picture employment card
- Birth certificate
- Social Security card
- Medicaid card
- Identity card in the Public Assistance system
- If working, most recent pay stub

Application process

Families with children must apply for shelter in order to show that they do not have an alternative housing option available to them.

Once a family arrives at PATH, they will first be interviewed by a Human Resources Administration (HRA) caseworker, who will inquire about their living situation and explain the services that may help them avoid entering shelter including family mediation, anti-eviction legal services, out-of-city relocation assistance, Family Eviction Prevention Supplement (FEPS), or a deal through HRA.

If these services do not apply to a family's specific circumstances, a DHS family worker will interview the family to obtain information about their prior living situation. Families may be assigned a temporary shelter placement for up to 10 days while DHS investigates the information provided during the interview. DHS determines whether the family is eligible or ineligible for shelter, based on whether they have fully adhered to the application and eligibility process and/or have other housing options available to them.

Every household has a right to a legal conference at PATH if they are found ineligible and disagree with the decision. In addition, they have 60 days after being found ineligible to request a Fair Hearing from New York State.

What to expect

Once a family enters a shelter they have certain responsibilities that they must meet, including obtaining and maintaining employment for all those who are able to work.

With the assistance of their caseworkers, families will develop an

Independent Living Plan (ILP), a document that outlines relevant goals to exit the shelter as soon as possible. Through DHS' policy of Client Responsibility, families in a shelter must actively participate in this process and take strides toward independent living.

Families are expected to participate in developing and completing their ILP, which includes steps toward obtaining permanent housing such as:

- Applying for Public Assistance (PA) and completing all requirements necessary for establishing and maintaining eligibility for PA benefits
- If able to work, actively seeking employment and accepting a suitable job when it is offered
- Working closely with their caseworker or housing specialist to locate and view available apartments
- Actively seeking permanent housing by viewing available apartments several times per week

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES (DHS)— ADULT FAMILY INTAKE CENTER (AFIC)

400-430 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/dhs/shelter/families/adult-families.page

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. Interpreter assistance is available for individuals who do not speak English.

Adult families

DHS considers an adult family to be any family without minor children, including the following household compositions:

- Applicants who are a legally married couple and present a valid original marriage certificate
- Applicants who are domestic partners and present a valid original domestic partnership certificate
- Adults who provide, as part of their application for temporary housing assistance, proof establishing the medical dependence of one applicant upon another
- Two or more adults who can provide birth certificates to prove a parent and child or sibling family relationship or share a caretak-

ing (emotionally or physically supportive) relationship, including an aunt or uncle to niece or nephew, grandparent to grandchild, parent to child or stepchild, or siblings

Clients must be able to verify that their household constitutes a family as defined above and demonstrate that they have resided with one another for 180 days (six months) within the year immediately prior to the date of their application.

Adult families applying for shelter must have valid, original identification, such as:

- Any form of ID with a picture and proof of age, such as a welfare ID card, Green Card, driver's license, passport or visa, or picture employment card
- Birth certificate
- Social Security card
- Medicaid card
- Identity card in the Public Assistance System
- If working, most recent pay stub

Each applicant is required to provide proof of residence for the past year. As such, it is always useful if clients are able to bring documents such as eviction papers or marshal's notices; leases; Con Edison, internet, or telephone bills; pay stubs; or proof of income.

Do not bring

- Any contraband, alcohol, or illegal substances
- Expensive personal belongings (DHS is not responsible for lost or damaged goods)
- Friends and visitors, or anyone not a part of your family
- Food
- Furniture
- Cameras or appliances
- Pets

What to expect

If a family is found eligible, they will be placed in temporary emergency housing. When in shelter, all clients will be expected to follow guidelines which include:

- Following the family's Independent Living Plan (ILP), which includes steps to get permanent housing

- Applying for public assistance or another type of housing subsidy
- Working closely with a caseworker or housing specialist to locate and view available apartments
- Actively seeking permanent housing for oneself and one's family by viewing available apartments several times per week
- Accepting a suitable apartment for oneself and one's family when it is offered
- Following shelter guidelines that prohibit behavior that places other clients and staff at risk

Failing to abide by the rules may have consequences including but not limited to the temporary discontinuance of shelter services.

If an applicant disagrees with the Agency's eligibility determination, their household has a right to a legal conference at AFIC. In addition, they have 60 days after being found ineligible to request a Fair Hearing from New York State by calling **800.342.3334**. NYC residents can call **800.205.0110** for emergencies. For speech or hearing impaired individuals, call the New York Relay Service at **711** and ask the operator to call **877.502.6155**.

Halfway & Three-Quarter Housing

Halfway housing

Halfway housing is temporary housing for individuals recovering from a substance use disorder or finishing a sentence post-incarceration. Halfway houses usually house people between 30 days and 2 years. Individuals can be mandated to reside in halfway housing, often after a period of incarceration. Individuals can also independently enter some facilities. Many halfway houses have strict rules of conduct that must be followed in order to remain in residence or finish a sentence. Rules often include maintaining sobriety, checking in when coming and going, and attending programs and meetings. In NYC, halfway houses are run both by government-sponsored organizations and by for-profit companies.

Three-quarter housing

Three-quarter houses are buildings that rent beds in apartments and houses. These buildings are operated by for-profit companies

and are currently unregulated in NYC. Originally fed by referrals from the city shelter system, operators now also recruit tenants leaving substance use disorder units, or being discharged from hospital psychiatric units or correctional facilities. Some companies advertise support services and assistance with finding permanent housing, but the quality and frequency of these services are varied and have received criticism by residents and advocacy groups.

On [page 205](#) of the *Legal* chapter, you will find the listing for **Mobilization for Justice**, which provides advice, counsel, and representation to residents on housing and related legal matters. Call **212.417.3700** or visit <https://mobilizationforjustice.org/get-help/mfy-in-the-field> for information about where and when they meet with clients throughout NYC.

Organizations for People Without Homes

ABRAHAM HOUSE

340 Willis Avenue, Bronx, NY 10454
Telephone: 718.292.9321
www.abrahamhouse.org

Provides transitional housing by referral for formerly incarcerated individuals. Operates a food pantry on Saturdays from 9am–11am. Provides free OSHA training in English and Spanish. Call for class schedules.

ACACIA NETWORK—GREENHOPE SERVICES FOR WOMEN, INC.

Provides one- and two-bedroom short-term housing, six-month residential rehab, and three-month transitional housing for formerly incarcerated women. Length of stay depends on client needs and availability. No permanent housing offered.

See the full listing for Greenhope on [page 293](#).

CENTER FOR URBAN COMMUNITY SERVICES (CUCS) 



198 East 121st Street, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 212.801.3300

www.cucs.org

Offers services including case management, medical, and psychiatric services to individuals and families in supportive housing units in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the Bronx. Trained housing consultants provide telephone consultation and referrals to service providers, advocates, family members, and homeless people in search of information on mental health supportive housing. Also provides free financial assistance.

The Reentry Coordination System provides services to incarcerated individuals to facilitate referrals to supportive housing, including coordination of video teleconference interviews pre-release, as well as referrals to forensic care coordination and outpatient mental health treatment services for people who are seriously mentally ill and are being released from NYS prisons to NYC.

**THE DOE FUND—READY, WILLING & ABLE (RWA)—
TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING**

Telephone: 646.672.2973 or 718.417.2538

www.doe.org

Provides paid transitional work experience, transitional housing, and supportive services including personalized case management, legal services, job and housing placement support, workforce development, and vocational training for homeless and formerly incarcerated men. A homeless assessment number is required for the residential program. Clients must abstain from drugs and alcohol while in the program. Call for information on intake.

THE FORTUNE SOCIETY



Provides supportive emergency, phased-permanent, and permanent housing solutions for homeless people with a history of incarceration or touchpoint with the criminal legal system, and their families. Please note there is a waiting list, so housing is not immediate.

See the full listing for The Fortune Society on [page 31](#).

HOUR CHILDREN



Provides transitional and permanent supportive housing for formerly incarcerated women and their families.

See the full listing for Hour Children on [page 348](#).

OSBORNE ASSOCIATION



Offers a range of services including assistance finding permanent supportive or affordable housing, and transitional and supportive housing.

The Fulton Community Reentry Center offers transitional reentry housing beds to men returning to NYC who are ages 50 and over, with a priority for people who have served long sentences. The building includes spaces to share meals, and hold classes, training sessions, support groups, events, and private meetings. Call **917.451.4165** for more information.

The Marcus Garvey Supportive Housing program provides 52 units of long-term housing in the Brownsville neighborhood of Brooklyn for people ages 50 and over who are reentering the community from lengthy incarceration and who would otherwise be homeless or unstably housed. A variety of reentry support services are available onsite. There is currently a waitlist for the program.

See the full listing for Osborne Association on [page 34](#).

PART OF THE SOLUTION (POTS)

Telephone: 718.220.4892

<https://potsbronx.org>

2450 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10458 (entrance on 188th Street)

2759 Webster Avenue, Bronx, New York 10458

Provides homeless and low-income individuals and families with a variety of supportive services. Services include a mailroom, showers, haircuts, and access to medical and dental services. Offers lunch and a food pantry. Also provides assistance with benefit applications, case management, employment assistance, legal services for supportive housing, and more. Some services are by appointment only. Contact for more information and hours for services.

PROJECT RENEWAL

200 Varick Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10014

Telephone: 212.620.0340

www.projectrenewal.org

Offers emergency shelter, transitional, and permanent supportive housing; robust mental health and primary care services; and workforce development programs that provide general job readiness training as well as sector-based programs. Job training and retention professionals specialize in helping formerly incarcerated individuals overcome barriers to employment. Supports individuals returning from incarceration through its Parole Support and Treatment Program (PSTP), which aims to help formerly incarcerated individuals with a mental health diagnosis integrate seamlessly back into the community through transitional and supportive housing, as well as case management services. Learn more about how to connect at www.projectrenewal.org/need-help.

PROVIDENCE HOUSE  

703 Lexington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221
Telephone: 718.455.0197 or 718.778.1310
www.providencehouse.org

Provides transitional residences, individual apartments, and permanent supportive housing specifically for women recently paroled from prison, and their children. Active clients are referred through the Women's Community Justice Project (WCJP), PATH, and the DHS. Clients receive shelter, food, and support services including enrolling in education or job-training programs, searching for employment, obtaining medical services, and finding a permanent place to live. By referral only, no walk-ins.

WOMEN'S PRISON ASSOCIATION (WPA)   

Provides shelter, case management, and support services to women who have been impacted by the criminal legal system, and their children. Placements are made through the Department of Homeless Services (DHS).

See the full listing for WPA on [page 37](#).

ACE PROGRAMS FOR THE HOMELESS

30-30 Northern Blvd., Suite B100, Long Island City, NY 11101
Telephone: 212.274.0550
<https://acenewyork.org>

Assists New Yorkers with reentering the workforce. Project Comeback, a vocational rehabilitation program, provides resume assistance, job search support, paid work experience opportunities, hard-skills certification training (OSHA, Custodial Maintenance, Food Protection, and Forklift Operation), as well as soft skills classes and individualized case management. Participants graduate when they secure full-time permanent employment. Project Stay, an employment-retention aftercare

program, offers graduates lifelong support and services assisting with maintaining employment and transitioning to self-sufficiency. Programs are provided in English.

THE BOWERY MISSION

227 Bowery, New York, NY 10002

Telephone: 212.674.3456

www.bowery.org

A faith-based organization that serves homeless and hungry New Yorkers. Offers meal service, clothing, showers, haircuts, shelter, medical care, referrals to legal help, residential recovery programs, transitional housing programs, vocational training, employment services, and services for children. Call for all locations, hours, and intake information.

Emergency shelter for up to seven nights is located at **90 Lafayette Street**, and first-time guests should arrive at 3pm for intake with no more than two bags. Guests must be able to climb stairs. Call **212.226.6214** for more information.

BREAKING GROUND

505 8th Avenue, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.389.9300 / Central Intake: 800.324.7055

<https://breakingground.org>

Provides supportive housing to the chronically homeless, low-income working adults, youth aging out of foster care, veterans, seniors, people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, and people living with mental illness. Also provides benefits assistance, medical care, mental health care, substance use referrals, skills-building, self-sufficiency programs, and connection to employment services. Call central intake for applications.

BRONXWORKS—HOMELESS OUTREACH TEAM

Telephone: 646.393.4070

Operates a mobile outreach team in the Bronx 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Provides support services including counseling, housing placement, medical services, benefits assistance, and alcohol and substance use disorder treatment referrals.

See the full listing for BronxWorks on [page 368](#).

COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

129 Fulton Street, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.776.2000 / Crisis Hotline: 888.358.2384

www.coalitionforthehomeless.org

The Crisis Intervention Program provides a full spectrum of services and support, including help accessing emergency shelters and obtaining government benefits, as well as information and advocacy to secure permanent housing. Referrals to emergency mail services, mental health or substance use treatment, job training, eviction prevention resources, and other services are available upon request. Does not operate shelters, but can advocate on behalf of homeless individuals and families within the NYC shelter system. Call the Crisis Hotline to speak with an advocate.

COVENANT HOUSE NEW YORK

A 24-hour multiservice walk-in center and shelter for young adults ages 16–21 experiencing homelessness.

See the full listing for Covenant House on [page 339](#).

HOUSING WORKS

120 Lawrence Street, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 347.473.7400

www.housingworks.org

A community of people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, providing comprehensive services to homeless and low-income New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS or at-risk of infection. Services include housing, job training, legal assistance, and comprehensive health-care. Contact for more information.

Offers wraparound services for individuals involved in the criminal legal system including the Emergency and Transitional Housing (ETH) Program providing 12 months of transitional housing for individuals ages 18 and over, released from incarceration in the past 12 months or actively enrolled in pre-trial or community supervision who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Email justiceinitiativesinfo@housingworks.org for information about enrollment.

Housing Assistance

NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)



Telephone: 718.707.7771

www.nyc.gov/nycha

Customer Contact Center Walk-In Locations:

Bronx/Manhattan/Queens

478 East Fordham Road, 2nd Floor Bronx, NY 10458

Hours: Mon–Fri 8–5

Brooklyn/Staten Island/Queens

787 Atlantic Avenue, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Hours: Mon–Fri 8–5

Provides affordable housing to low- and moderate-income residents in publicly owned buildings throughout the five boroughs. Offers residents opportunities to participate in community, educational, and recreational programs, as well as providing job-readiness and training initiatives.

Apply for NYCHA housing online at www.nyc.gov/site/nycha/eligibility/apply.page. Applications may also be picked up in person at a Customer Contact Center or requested via mail by calling a Customer Contact Center. Applicants select a first- and second-choice borough and provide information about their total household income, family composition, and current living situation. If you apply as a “Victim of Domestic Violence,” you must first submit your application and then complete a Victim of Domestic Violence (VDV) form. Applicants will receive an acknowledgment letter within two weeks of receipt of their application. The waiting lists for public housing are long, particularly in Manhattan and Queens.

Your application is active for two years. Until you are called for an Eligibility Interview, you must update and renew your application by clicking “Update/Renew My Case” on <https://selfserve.nycha.info> every 24 months to remain on the waitlist. After the renewal, you will retain the filing date of the original application.

FAMILY REENTRY PROGRAM

Information Line: 212.306.6024

Helps to reunite select individuals leaving prison and jail with their families who live in qualified public housing apartments and provides reentry services. Eligible individuals must demonstrate that they are motivated to make a positive change in their lives and must agree to intensive case management services. Accepts applications from currently incarcerated people who have a release date or from people who were released from a prison, jail, juvenile facility, or federal facility within the last three years.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (HPD)

100 Gold Street, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.863.6300

www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/index.page

Provides information about affordable housing throughout the five

boroughs. Apartments are for low-, moderate-, and middle-income individuals and families.

The Housing Connect website at <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov> includes a list of rental and home buying lotteries, as well as additional resources for apartment seekers. Information is offered in multiple languages.

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)— HOMEBASE

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/homebase.page

Offers a range of services including assistance with public benefits, help to prevent eviction, emergency rental assistance, financial counseling and money management, help with relocating, and short-term financial assistance. Call or visit the website for a list of locations. Those seeking services must call in advance to schedule an appointment.

Rentals

It is difficult in most areas of NYC to find decent housing at an affordable rent. It may require time and patience for individuals to find what they are looking for. There are many websites dedicated to listing housing options, including rentals. If the help of a real estate agent or broker is contracted, be prepared to pay a fee, typically 15 percent of a year's rent.

NYC Pending Law—Fairness in Apartment Rentals Act

In 2024, NYC Council passed the Fairness in Apartment Rentals Act, which would eliminate broker fees for most renters, shifting the fee onto whoever hires the brokers (usually the landlord or management company). At the time of publication, the law should take effect in mid-June but may come across legal challenges. For more information and updates visit <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6557858&GUID=2E6273DC-FF0F-40B2-AAB5-B9B3D9BD09DB>.

Starting in 2023, rental leases across NYS must include information on whether a property is in a floodplain or has experienced damage due to flooding in the past, along with the typical details about subletting, lead-based paint, and security deposits.

The Office of the Public Advocate maintains the **Worst Landlord Watchlist**, an information-sharing tool that enables tenants, public officials, advocates, and other concerned individuals to identify which residential property owners consistently break NYC laws intended to protect the rights and safety of tenants. Available online at www.landlordwatchlist.com.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (HPD)—NYC HOUSING CONNECT (AFFORDABLE RENTAL LOTTERIES)

Telephone: 311

Affordable Housing Lottery Helpline: 212.863.7990

www.nyc.gov/housingconnect

Provides New Yorkers with information on affordable housing opportunities. Individuals can learn how to apply for affordable housing, view current and upcoming housing lotteries, and apply to housing options for which one may qualify. Information is available in multiple languages.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ON HOUSING

Tenant Hotline: 212.979.0611

www.metcouncilonhousing.org

Provides fact sheets on tenant rights, rent guidelines, rent control stabilization, subletting/roommates, heat, hot water, pests, and housing court. Call Mon and Wed 1:30–8, Tue 5:30–8, and Fri 1:30–5 for information, assistance, and brief answers on your rights as a tenant, including information about evictions. Can provide referrals to agencies, community organizing groups, and tenant lawyers.

Tenants' Rights free walk-in clinic offers tenants assistance with landlord-tenant disputes, in Manhattan locations from Oct–Jun:

- 1st and 3rd Tue 6:30pm at 76 Trinity Place, lower Manhattan
- 2nd and 4th Tue 6pm at 5030 Broadway, Inwood

Tenant Rights & Housing Discrimination

In New York City, tenants have rights relating to the safety and quality of their housing. Visit the NYC Housing Preservation and Development's website at www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/tenants-rights-and-responsibilities.page to find resources and information.

Some people confuse fair housing rights (anti-discrimination laws) with tenant rights. If an individual experiences difficulties with an application, lease, lease renewal, services, or rent that are believed to be the result of a discriminatory act (occurring because of one's membership in a particular protected class such as race, creed, national origin, etc.), that person should call **311** and ask for the **Commission on Human Rights**. See the full listing for the NYC Commission on Human Rights in the *Legal* chapter on [page 233](#).

Fair Chance for Housing Act

The following is from the Legal Action Center's Fair Chance for Housing resource, available online at www.lac.org/resources. More information is available at www.fairchancehousing.org.

Starting in 2025, most NYC housing providers, including landlords and realtors, may not consider most people's conviction history until after determining a housing applicant's other qualifications.

Housing providers can still consider:

- People with convictions on the federal or state sex offense registry.
- People with a felony conviction within five years of release or date of sentence.
- People with a misdemeanor conviction within three years of release or date of sentence.

Before running a background check, providers must:

- Review all other criteria (tenant history, income, credit, pets, etc.) and decide on your application based on that criteria).
- Make a conditional offer if they want to offer you the unit.
- Tell you that they are running a background check and give you a Fair Chance Housing Notice.

After running a background check providers must:

- Give you all the information they received about your conviction history, including the background check report.
- Allow you five business days to correct errors and/or provide mitigating information or evidence of rehabilitation.
- Do an “individualized assessment” of your conviction history and any evidence of rehabilitation you submitted.

If a provider rejects your application because of your conviction history, they must explain in writing:

- Why your criminal history is relevant to their “legitimate business interest” and
- How the information you submitted was considered.

In NYS it is already illegal for housing providers statewide to ask about or consider cases that have been dismissed, sealed, expunged, vacated, adjudicated as a youthful offender (vs. juvenile delinquent), or where you were found not guilty after trial. Housing providers should never ask, “Have you ever been arrested?”

When deciding whether to rent to you, providers also cannot consider:

- Non-criminal violations.
- Convictions covered by a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities
- Non-New York State convictions (1) related to reproductive or gender-affirming care that is lawful in NYS or (2) for cannabis possession that is not a felony in NYS.
- Non-convictions, including pending cases, criminal charges that did not result in a conviction, and adjournments in contemplation of a dismissal (“ACDs”).

Supportive Housing Information & Rights

Every supportive housing provider in NYC is required to provide every tenant in supportive housing with a notice clearly explaining their tenancy rights, and detailing key information about their

housing. The following is tenants' rights in supportive housing information from SHOUT's website, available at <https://shoutnyc.org/know-your-rights>.

Tenants' rights in supportive housing:

- You have the right to a court process before being evicted.
- If you have been residing in your apartment for more than 30 days or have an occupancy or lease agreement, you cannot be evicted unless a housing court judge enters an eviction order. This means your landlord or supportive housing program cannot change your apartment locks or prevent you from entering your building, even if you are “discharged” or “terminated” from your program.
- You have the right to an attorney in an eviction proceeding.
- You have the right to get repairs.
- You have the right to call 311 to report conditions, and to send a certified mail letter to your landlord or service provider requesting repairs.
- You have the right to start a case for repairs in housing court.
- You have the right to request reasonable accommodations in your housing to meet your documented medical or psychological needs, which includes the right to an emotional support animal.
- You have the right to live free from harassment, discrimination, or retaliation from your landlord or supportive housing provider. This includes freedom from threats of retaliation, including threats of transfer, discharge, or loss of privileges, for raising concerns about your housing.
- You have the right to organize with a tenants' association or community organizing group for your housing rights.

Rights specific to tenants in permanent (unlicensed) supported housing, including scattered site and single site/congregate units:

- You cannot be transferred to another unit without your consent.
- You have the right to have family live with you, and cannot be discharged/evicted due to a change in your family size.
- You have the right to written receipts for rent.
- You have the right to have guests visit you in your supportive housing unit at any time, including overnight visits.
- Depending on your housing accommodation, you may have the right to have a roommate.

Rights specific to tenants in transitional (licensed) supportive housing, including Community Residence SROs, and Level II apartment treatment programs:

- You have the right to receive a clearly written occupancy agreement from your provider.
- You have the right to receive a timely and complete personal needs allowance.
- You have the right to participate in a residents' council or otherwise provide input into program rules and operations.
- You have the right to file a grievance against your supportive housing provider through their internal grievance procedure or by contacting the **New York State Office of Mental Health** at **800.597.8481**.

Domestic Violence

NYS Housing law offers protections for people who are victims of domestic violence. If you are a victim of domestic violence and reasonably fear staying in a leased housing situation because of possible domestic violence in the future, you can end your lease early without penalty, and without owing rent for the rest of the lease period. In addition, it is illegal for a landlord or homeowner to discriminate against you by refusing to sell, rent, or lease you a home due to the fact that you are the victim of domestic violence. For more information, including on how to break your lease, visit the **WomensLaw** website at www.womenslaw.org/laws/ny/housing-laws/basic-info-and-definitions.

Eviction Information

It is important to stay up-to-date with policies and legal processes for tenants to understand which protections are available to you.

A letter or notice from your landlord demanding rent is not an eviction. **Only a judge can evict you.** However, if you receive an eviction notice from the Civil Court of the City of New York, this is a legal document and requires a response. You have the right to a tenant attorney to defend you in court.

Under New York City's Right-to-Counsel (RTC) law, DSS/HRA's Office of Civil Justice (OCJ) provides some low-income tenants facing eviction in Housing Court or NYCHA administrative proceedings with access to free legal representation and advice provided

by nonprofit legal services organizations from across the five boroughs. Right-to-Counsel legal services are free, available in every ZIP code, and available regardless of immigration status. If you are facing eviction **call 311 and ask for “Right to Counsel”**. Free interpretation services are available.

If you are facing eviction and can't get a lawyer through the program, call the **Housing Court Answers hotline** at **212.962.4795** or **718.557.1379** to speak with an advocate.

For information and updates on **NYC Rental Assistance Programs**, including eligibility and information for an emergency cash grant for rent arrears, visit www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/rental-assistance.page or call the **NYC HRA Infoline** at **718.557.1399**.

For information on the **NYC Rent Freeze Program**, which includes the **Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) Program** and the **Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) Program**, to help those eligible stay in affordable housing by freezing their rent, visit www.nyc.gov/site/rentfreeze/index.page.

The **Right to Counsel NYC Coalition** provides up-to-date information including fact sheets and Know Your Rights guides online at www.righttocounselnyc.org.

The **Legal Aid Society's Homeless Rights Project (HRP)** protects and enforces the rights of homeless families and individuals in NYC. For more information visit <https://legalaidnyc.org/programs-projects-units/homeless-rights-project> or call the **Homeless Rights Helpline** at **800.649.9125** Mon–Fri, 10–3.

NYS DIVISION OF HOMES AND COMMUNITY RENEWAL (DHCR)—OFFICE OF RENT ADMINISTRATION

Telephone: 833.499.0343
www.nyshcr.org/rent

Provides fact sheets and notices about rent in NYC. Tenants in rent-controlled or rent-stabilized apartments may contact DHCR with complaints, and DHCR may impose penalties on building owners in the form of rent reductions if deemed valid.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (HPD)—TENANT RIGHTS

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/tenants-rights-and-responsibilities.page

The website contains information on tenants' rights and other resources, in multiple languages. Call for complaints about lack of heat and hot water, or a landlord's refusal to make emergency repairs in an apartment or building. Provides a handbook of NYC tenant rights, called *The ABCs of Housing*, available online.

NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)—MAINTENANCE COMPLAINT

Telephone: 718.707.7771 or 311

<https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-01076>

Tenants with maintenance complaints about apartments in NYCHA buildings can report maintenance issues 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Residents of NYCHA properties under private management should report maintenance issues directly to the management company.

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)—LEGAL SERVICES FOR TENANTS

Telephone: 311 and ask for the “Tenant Helpline”

www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/legal-services-for-tenants.page

Offers universal phone-based access to free legal advice and counsel for NYC residential renters, regardless of immigration status, in need of assistance related to housing, including legal questions or issues about tenancy, eviction, or landlord-tenant disputes.

Tenants facing a housing dispute can connect to legal service providers at their first Housing Court conferences. Go to your initial

court appearance and say “I would like an attorney” when you appear in court.

NYC MAYOR’S OFFICE TO PROTECT TENANTS (MOPT)

www.nyc.gov/content/tenantprotection/pages/

Provides information and resources for NYC tenants including eviction prevention and community legal resources for tenants, rental assistance, housing application assistance, and more.

The **Tenant Resource Portal**, available at www.nyc.gov/content/tenantresourceportal/pages, provides residential renters access to free information about how to remain stably housed. The portal features an eviction prevention tool to help renters navigate free public and private resources.

Information is available in multiple languages.

HOUSING COURT ANSWERS

Housing Court Hotline: 212.962.4795

<https://housingcourtanswers.org>

Provides a range of information for tenants, landlords, and advocates. Call for assistance with housing court and housing court procedures; landlord and tenant rules and regulations; enforcement of housing code violations; referrals for free legal help; referrals to community organizations that help with housing problems; referrals to charitable organizations or information about the Human Resources Administration’s rules for assistance with back rent; and more.

JUSTFIX.NYC

www.justfix.nyc

A website with online tools for tenants, housing organizers, and legal advocates. The Learning Center has information about

eviction, charges, repairs, laws, and discrimination. The Letter of Complaint tool creates and sends a formal letter via USPS Certified Mail to your landlord for free, requesting repairs in your apartment. Who Owns What provides information on buildings and landlords including code violations, evictions, rent-stabilized apartments, and property ownership. The Rent History Request service allows you to request a copy of your apartment's rent history from the Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) and can be done online or via text.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION FOR INTER-CULTURAL AFFAIRS (NAICA)—LEGAL SERVICES 

1075 Grand Concourse, Suite 1B, Bronx, NY 10452
Telephone: 718.538.3344 x100
www.naicany.org

Offers eviction prevention and rental assistance application services to single adults, families, and older people who are Bronx tenants. Can submit a Family Eviction Prevention Subsidy (FEPS) application and provide free legal representation to tenants. Contact for registration and eligibility information.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING ORGANIZED AND UNITED TENANTS (SHOUT!)

Telephone: 856.403.8569
<https://shoutnyc.org>

An organizing group created by and for supportive housing tenants and applicants. Represents tenants and applicants across NYC, including LGBTQI+ people, people with disabilities, people of color, seniors, people living with mental illness, domestic and gender based violence survivors, veterans, people living with HIV/AIDS, people with a history of incarceration, individuals aging out of foster care, individuals struggling with substance use, and low-income people who are currently and formerly homeless and navigating supportive housing. The website provides resources

including tenants' rights in supportive housing, meeting information, and other ways to get involved.

UNLOCK NYC

<https://weunlock.nyc>

A website with online tools for people in NYC who have faced discrimination due to having rental assistance vouchers such as CityFHEPS, Section 8, FHEPS, or HASA. The tools help with identifying, documenting, and reporting discrimination. Also connects people to government agencies and other resources so they can exercise their rights and find housing, workshops, one-on-one peer support calls, and more.

Financial Assistance

WE'LL GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS THE FIRST SOCIETY
THAT WOULDN'T SAVE ITSELF BECAUSE IT WASN'T COST-
EFFECTIVE.

— KURT VONNEGUT



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY JONATHAN RIVERA

Dealing with government agencies requires patience and persistence. Service can be impersonal and it is not uncommon to be sent from one office or agency to the next in search of simple answers. Most government departments and community groups have posted their application forms, eligibility requirements, and procedures online.

For updated information on HRA Centers including open locations, operating hours, and services being offered call the general information line at **718.557.1399** or visit www.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page.

Government Grants and Grant Information

The government does not typically offer free money or grants to individuals for personal needs, but people may be eligible for government benefits or loans, administered through various agencies, to help with their expenses. For more information visit www.usa.gov/government-grants-and-loans.

Federal assistance programs can provide financial help with living expenses or business costs. The following are official government websites to search for programs:

- Benefits.gov—food, housing, healthcare, child care, Social Security, and more
- GovLoans.gov—small business, education, housing, and more
- Grants.gov—not for individuals or personal expenses; typically only for organizations working with government-funded programs and projects

Each program has its own eligibility rules, application process, and deadlines.

Information on **NYS Grants Management for Organizations** is available at <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov>.

For information on help with starting a business, go to [page 384](#). For information on continuing education grants and loans, go to [page 62](#).

How to find unclaimed money from the government

If a business, financial institution, or government owes you money that you did not collect it is considered unclaimed. There is no

single government database for all unclaimed money. The website www.usa.gov/unclaimed-money provides a list of databases and agencies with links to search for each type of unclaimed money.

In NYS, lost or unclaimed money gets turned over by organizations required to report dormant accounts to the NYS Office of the State Comptroller. This money includes things like forgotten savings accounts, lost paychecks, and stocks or bonds. To search if you have unclaimed funds visit www.osc.state.ny.us/unclaimed-funds.

Public Benefits

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)

General Infoline: 718.557.1399

www.nyc.gov/hra

Administers programs in a number of areas, including:

- Food stamps and food pantry programs
- Childcare
- Support for domestic violence survivors
- Home Energy Assistance Program (help with heating bills)
- Job search and placement services
- Services for people living with HIV and AIDS
- Child support services
- Home care
- Medicaid
- Emergency assistance

Information on applying for benefits is available through the automated telephone line and website. The website includes applications for download and printing, eligibility requirements, and lists of frequently asked questions about benefits. Visit www.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page to find updated information on open locations and operating hours.

ACCESS NYC

<https://access.nyc.gov>

The online tool for New Yorkers for help with benefits including food, money, housing, internet services, childcare vouchers, work, and more. The Eligibility Screening Check goes over potential eligibility for over 30 benefits. Program Guides provide information for over 40 city, state, and federal benefits and services, with details including how a program works, how to qualify, what documents are needed, options for how to apply (online, phone, mail, in person), and how to receive help. The website has been professionally translated into English, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (Traditional), French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu.

LEGAL AID SOCIETY—ACCESS TO BENEFITS (A2B) HELPLINE

Helpline: 888.663.6880 (Mon–Fri 10–3)

<https://legalaidnyc.org/get-help/government-benefits>

Provides assistance in getting, keeping, and using government benefits and public assistance such as SNAP (food stamps), SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Medicare, and other health insurances. Interpreters are available for all languages.

See the full listing for Legal Aid Society on [page 203](#).

VOLUNTEERS OF LEGAL SERVICE (VOLS)—BENEFITS LAW PROJECT (BLP)

40 Worth Street, Suite 829, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 212.966.4400 / BLP Hotline: 347.521.5720

<https://volsprobono.org>

Helps low-income New Yorkers access essential public benefits. Assists with unemployment insurance benefits, Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE)/Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) benefits for seniors and disabled adults under the NYC Rent

Freeze Program, and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. Call the BLP Hotline for questions about eligibility, the application process, and other concerns related to benefits access.

Temporary Cash Assistance

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)—CASH ASSISTANCE

Infoline: 718.557.1399

www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/cash-assistance.page

Eligible families may receive up to 60 months of federally funded cash assistance under the Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) Program. Eligibility criteria must be met and include income and resources, immigration status, and residency requirements. Single individuals without children and families who have already received cash assistance for 60 months may receive benefits under the NYS Safety Net Program.

Eligible clients receiving temporary cash assistance must engage in work activities. HRA refers clients to programs designed to provide job training and placement, education, resume services, workshops, and other support services. Those participating in an approved program can receive car fare and childcare expenses so that they can meet their requirements.

Emergency Assistance

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)—EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Infoline: 718.557.1399

www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/cash-assistance.page

Eligible NYC residents may apply for emergency assistance, also called a “One Shot Deal”, when an unforeseen circumstance prevents the applicant from meeting an expense. Applicants may obtain rental assistance in cases of impending evictions, assistance with home energy and utility bills, disaster assistance including moving expenses, and assistance with the purchase of personal items for health and safety. An applicant must meet eligibility guidelines and is subject to an investigative review of the application. Some or all of the Emergency Assistance may be required to be paid back; HRA notifies applicants if and how much they will need to pay back.

Food Stamps (SNAP)

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)—SNAP



Infoline: 718.557.1399

www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/snap-benefits-food-program.page

SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, is a federally funded program designed to enable people with limited income to increase their ability to purchase food. The program provides food stamp benefits through the use of a debit card that can be used in place of cash. People receiving public assistance can sign up at an HRA Job Center. For information on shopping for groceries online with SNAP benefits and a list of participating stores visit www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/snap-online-shopping.page. Call for more information or to have an application mailed.

Food

NYC 311—FOOD PANTRIES AND SOUP KITCHENS

Telephone: 311

<https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-02740>

Call or visit the website to find nearby locations of food pantries,

soup kitchens, free meals for seniors, and summer meals for children ages 18 and under.

FOOD HELP NYC

<https://finder.nyc.gov/foodhelp>

An online directory to find locations that offer free food, including food pantries and soup kitchens by diet.

GENERATION NYC—LGBTQ FOOD ASSISTANCE

<https://growingupnyc.cityofnewyork.us/generationnyc/lgbtq-food-assistance>

The website provides a list of food pantries and soup kitchens that have explicitly self-reported their desire to welcome LGBTQ community members.

COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS—RESOURCE GUIDE

www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/get-help/i-need-food

An online resource guide that provides a list of emergency food options, based on location.

FOOD BANK FOR NEW YORK CITY

Campus Pantry: 252 West 116th Street, New York, NY 10026

Telephone: 212.566.7855

www.foodbanknyc.org/get-help

A website to locate food pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers, and other resources to obtain meals in NYC neighborhoods. Also provides assistance with SNAP applications and re-certifications. The Campus Pantry is open for pick up Tue and Thu 11–2:30, Wed 12–6, and Sat 11–2. Hot meals are provided Mon, Wed, and Fri 4–6. Call for more information on programs in the food assistance network.

CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY CARES

Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine

1047 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10025

Telephone: 212.316.7583

www.stjohndivine.org/education-outreach/cathedral-community-cares

Operates a soup kitchen that is open every Sunday with the lineup

starting at 9:30 for a hot meal and take-away brown bag meal. The food pantry is available Mon, Thu, and Fri 9–5, and Tue and Wed 12–5. The Clothing Closet is available for distribution of casual clothing, free of charge, Tue and Wed 10–12. Interview clothing is by appointment only with a referral letter. Assistance with applying for benefits (Access HRA) is available by appointment. Contact for the up-to-date program schedules.

COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS—GRAND CENTRAL FOOD PROGRAM

Provides healthy meals as well as other essential items at over 20 stops in Manhattan and the Bronx every night of the year. The starting location is St. Bart’s, 51st Street between Park and Lex, at 5:30. Call or visit www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/gcfcf for a list of stops.

See the full listing for Coalition for the Homeless on [page 90](#).

GROWNYC

PO Box 2327, New York, NY 10272
Telephone: 212.788.7900
www.grownyc.org

Coordinates and promotes over 80 farmers markets, Farmstands, and Fresh Food Box sites offering fresh, local, and seasonal produce across all 5 boroughs. All locations accept EBT/food stamps. Call to request a mailed map of locations. Days and times for each site differ.

HOLY APOSTLES SOUP KITCHEN

296 9th Avenue, New York, NY 10001
Telephone: 212.924.0167
<https://holyapostlesnyc.org>

Provides meals Mon–Fri 10:30am–12:30pm. Pick up for grocer-

ies at the pantry is available Tue–Thu 9:30–11am and 1:30–3pm. Also provides social service support to public benefits, computer classes, and referrals to healthcare. Ask for more information during soup kitchen hours.

ST. JOHN'S BREAD AND LIFE

795 Lexington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221

Telephone: 718.574.0058

www.breadandlife.org

Provides combination breakfast/lunch grab-and-go bags Mon–Thu 10–12. Call for information on assistance with benefits, mail service, to make an appointment at the medical clinic, and information on what documents are needed.

Clothing

Look up Clothing in the index of this book to find organizations that provide free clothing.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION—DONATENYC

www.nyc.gov/assets/donate/index.shtml

An online directory of locations to find clothing, and more.

Health Insurance Assistance

For information on the NYS Health Plan Marketplace, see [page 133](#).

MEDICAID

Telephone: 877.267.2323 / NY Medicaid Helpline: 800.541.2831

www.medicaid.gov

The federal program, working in cooperation with state governments, to partly finance medical assistance to low-income people. Eligibility information and applications are available online. Call for more information or to order an application kit.

MEDICARE

Telephone: 800.633.4227 / TTY: 877.486.2048

www.medicare.gov

The federal government's health insurance program for people ages 65 and over.

ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE (EPIC)

Helpline: 800.332.3742 / TTY: 800.290.9138

www.health.ny.gov/health_care/epic

Helps income-eligible people ages 65 and older to supplement their out-of-pocket Medicare Part D drug plan costs. Call or visit the website for information on eligibility.

Victim Assistance

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION (FTC)—BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

Telephone: 877.382.4357

www.ftc.gov

Provides information and printed guides that contain lists of non-profit, state, and local agencies that can help resolve consumer issues. Contact to file complaints regarding identity theft, scams and rip-offs, unwanted telemarketing/text/spam on mobile devices or telephones, fraud, and more.

NYS OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES

55 Hanson Place, 10th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Telephone: 800.247.8035

<https://ovs.ny.gov>

Provides reimbursement under certain conditions for medical expenses, loss of earnings, funeral expenses, and lost or destroyed essential personal property. Contact for more information and eligibility requirements. Language assistance is available.

Taxes

New York City public libraries collaborate with outside organizations to provide free tax prep at select locations. Contact information by borough is on [page 5](#).

NYC FREE TAX PREP

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/dca/consumers/file-your-taxes.page

Offers free in-person and remote services to eligible people living in NYC, including in-person tax prep, drop-off service, virtual tax prep, and self-prep with help (or assisted self-prep). Also provides services for small business owners, freelancers, and gig workers. Visit the website for more information including income eligibility.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS)

Telephone: 800.829.1040

www.irs.gov

Provides information on all tax topics including information on alternative filing methods, exemptions, tax extensions, itemized deductions, child and dependent care credit, and whether or not one should itemize.

The **IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)** and **Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE)** programs offer free basic tax return preparation to qualified individuals. For information about eligibility and locations visit www.irs.gov/individuals/free-tax-return-preparation-for-qualifying-taxpayers.

TAXPAYER ADVOCATE SERVICES (TAS)

www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov

An independent organization within the IRS. Advocates help people

who have tax problems that they can't resolve on their own. For more information visit the website.

People who have not opened a case with TAS, should call **877.777.4778** to get started. Those who already have a case open should contact their local TAS office, listed below.

Albany

11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 354, Albany, NY 12207

Telephone: 518.292.3001

Brookhaven

1040 Waverly Avenue, Stop 02, Holtsville, NY 11742

Telephone: 631.654.6686

Brooklyn

2 Metro Tech Center, 100 Myrtle Avenue, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 718.834.2200

Buffalo

130 South Elmwood Avenue, Room 265, Buffalo, NY 14202

Telephone: 716.961.5300

Manhattan

290 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.436.1011

Those who have been unable to resolve their tax issues through normal channels and are facing undue hardship as a result of IRS actions or inaction should use Form 911, available to download at www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/contact-us/submit-a-request-for-assistance.

Financial Counseling & Rights

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—FINANCIAL LITERACY SERVICES

The Thomas Yoseloff Business Center at Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL)

455 5th Avenue, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10016

Telephone: 212.592.7057

www.nypl.org/business/resources/financial-resources

Offers information and services to assist individuals in making financial choices. Webinars cover budgeting, saving, investing in stocks and bonds, avoiding scams and fraud, college planning/financial aid, and more. Free, private, and confidential financial coaching sessions are available by phone or online. Financial professionals answer questions about personal money matters. Budget and Credit Coaching offers individuals ongoing assistance with debt problems. Medicare Counseling provides guidance on enrollment, coverage, prescription drug plans, and costs. Visit the website for more information.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—FINANCIAL SERVICES

10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Telephone: 718.622.4460

www.bklynlibrary.org/calendar/list/Finance

www.bklynlibrary.org/adult-learning/learning-centers

Provides free financial counseling along with classes on topics including budgeting, investing, student loans, preparing for retirement, and more. Also provides help with taxes. Offers one-on-one help to connect to social services such as childcare referrals, housing assistance, healthcare, legal services, employment opportunities, navigating college and training programs, and more. Visit the website for class schedules, registration information needed to sign up for classes, and the appointment form for one-on-one assistance.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION (DCWP)—FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTERS

Telephone: 311 and ask for “Financial Counseling”

www.nyc.gov/site/dca/consumers/get-free-financial-counseling.page

Provides free one-on-one professional financial counseling and coaching. Services include help with creating a budget, establishing or improving credit, setting up a spending plan, opening a safe and affordable bank account, contacting lenders about debt (including student loans), developing a strategy to reduce debt or lower payments, accessing government resources, and more. Call or visit the website to make an appointment.

CAMBA

Telephone: 718.287.0010

<https://camba.org>

Provides economic development programs including education and advocacy services, financial counseling, money management, small business services, workforce development services, refugee assistance, and services to Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) Section 8 recipients. Provides foreclosure and eviction prevention counseling and services. Also provides a broad range of programs within education and youth development, family support, health, housing, and free legal services to low-income residents. Operates in multiple locations throughout the five boroughs. Visit the website for information on locations, programming updates, and eligibility.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY (CSS)

633 3rd Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 212.254.8900

www.cssny.org

Provides a wide array of services to low-income New Yorkers. Offers free one-on-one assistance including helping people find, use, and resolve problems with health insurance and care; financial advocacy and support, including assistance with student loan debt questions and problems; income support services; reentry; legal advocacy and services; youth mentoring; and senior services.

NEW ECONOMY PROJECT—NYC FINANCIAL JUSTICE HOTLINE

121 West 27th Street, Suite 804, New York, NY 10001
Financial Justice Hotline: 212.925.4929
www.neweconomynyc.org

A nonprofit organization that works with community groups to build a new economy rooted in racial and social justice, cooperation, neighborhood equity, and ecological sustainability. Visit the website for Know Your Rights resources on issues such as debt collection, creditor lawsuits, community banking and finance, credit reports, and predatory lending.

Also operates the NYC Financial Justice Hotline, which provides free legal assistance to low-income NYC residents on financial justice issues, including predatory banking and debt collection practices, wage garnishment, frozen bank accounts, discriminatory credit reporting, and much more. People can call the hotline Mon 4–6pm and Tue–Thu 12–2pm, or fill out the intake form online at fjhotline.nyc. The hotline is staffed by English and Spanish speakers, with interpretation available in many other languages.

MONEY MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL (MMI)

Telephone: 866.889.9347
www.moneymanagement.org

Provides free counseling for people with financial or credit problems. Offers advice for foreclosures, mortgage, bankruptcy, and student loans (by appointment over the phone). Help with preparing budgets and how to establish credit is also available.

**NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYLCA)—
VOLUNTEER LAWYER FOR THE DAY CONSUMER DEBT
PROGRAM** 

Provides free legal assistance to individuals who are being sued by creditors for credit card and other types of debt in the New York County Civil Court. NYCLA staff and volunteer attorneys provide assistance in court, including reviewing documents, giving advice, and providing limited scope representation to pro se litigants during their court appearance.

See the full listing for NYCLA on [page 206](#).

URBAN UPBOUND 

Administration Office**12-11 40th Avenue, Long Island City, NY 11101****Telephone: 718.784.0877****<https://urbanupbound.org>**

Provides services to public housing residents and other low-income New Yorkers in locations throughout NYC. Offers employment services, financial counseling, free tax preparation, Urban Upbound federal credit union, youth development, a college access program, and a worker cooperative initiative. Visit the website for contact information and to set up an appointment.

Physical & Mental Health

IT'S NOT ABOUT SELF-CARE—IT'S ABOUT COLLECTIVE CARE. COLLECTIVE CARE MEANS SHIFTING OUR ORGANIZATIONS TO BE ONES WHERE PEOPLE FEEL FINE IF THEY GET SICK, CRY, HAVE NEEDS, START LATE BECAUSE THE BUS BROKE DOWN, MOVE SLOWER, ONES WHERE THERE'S FOOD AT MEETINGS, PEOPLE WORK FROM HOME—AND THESE AREN'T THINGS WE APOLOGIZE FOR.

— LEAH LAKSHMI PIEPZNA-SAMARASINHA



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ARTWORK BY C. HENDRICKS



Know Your Rights Resources

My Patient Rights is a website that provides rights information, advocacy tips, and resources to people who have been denied treatment or medicines, experienced delays, or are dissatisfied with the decisions made by their health plan, available online at <https://mypatientrights.org>.

Visit www.health.ny.gov/professionals/patients/patient_rights for publications on patients' rights in NYS. For information on the laws that protect consumers by requiring health plans to provide coverage for mental health that is comparable to coverage for physical health, visit <https://ag.ny.gov/publications/mental-health-parity-laws>.

ProPublica's Claim File Helper is a free tool that helps people customize a letter requesting the notes and documents their insurer used when deciding to deny coverage. Most people in the US facing a denial have the right to request their claim file from their insurer, and the information in the claim file can be critical when appealing denials. For more information visit <https://projects.propublica.org/claimfile>.

NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS—CORRECTIONAL HEALTH SERVICES (CHS)

Telephone: 347.774.7000

www.nychealthandhospitals.org/correctionalhealthservices

Provides medical, nursing, and mental health care; social work services; substance use treatment; dental and vision care; pharmacy; discharge planning; and reentry support to patients from pre-arraignment through discharge and reentry at NYC DOC sites.

Reentry Service Center

Provides individuals released from Rikers help connecting to health and social services in the community. Upon release from custody, individuals can also visit the center to use a phone; obtain links to medication; and get directions, MetroCards, Narcan and fentanyl test strips, toiletry kits, and coffee and snacks. The center

provides naloxone training and kits and fentanyl test strips to all visitors. The center is located next to the Q100 bus stop, in front of the Samuel L. Perry Center; open Mon–Fri 8am–12am (midnight).

Community Re-entry Assistant Network (CRAN)

Provides reentry support in the community to all people who have been incarcerated in the NYC jail system within the last two years. Connects individuals to mental health, medical, substance use, housing, educational/vocational, and social services in the community. Assists with obtaining medications, submitting applications, and making appointments. Individuals with serious mental illness are also eligible for case management services that begin in partnership with the CHS Social Work Department while incarcerated and provided for up to six months post-release. CRAN offices (below) are open Mon–Fri 9–5. Walk-ins are available at the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens offices; call ahead to make an appointment for Staten Island.

Bronx

1020 Grand Concourse, North Professional Wing, Bronx, NY 10451
Telephone: 718.538.7416

Brooklyn

175 Remsen Street, 5th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.975.0180

Manhattan

80 Centre Street, Suite 200C, New York, NY 10013
Telephone: 718.975.1180

Queens

120-34 Queens Blvd., Suite 225, Kew Gardens, NY 11415
Telephone: 718.261.4202

Staten Island

120 Stuyvesant Place, Suite 410, Staten Island, NY 10301
Telephone: 718.727.9722

PORTline: 646.614.1000

PORTline is a general helpline for people who are in, or have been in, the New York City jail system. Peers are able to provide informational support; connect callers to reentry assistance pre-release;

make referrals to community-based healthcare and social service providers; assist with post-release prescriptions; and schedule appointments with the PORT Practices.

People in custody can call 777#. For people or providers in the community looking for assistance, please call **646.614.1000** or email **CHSPORTline@nychhc.org**. PORTline staff take calls Mon–Fri 8–5.

Point of Reentry and Transition (PORT) Practices

PORT Practices provide primary care for people returning to the community. Staff include physicians who are sensitive to the experiences of incarceration and reentry, as well as community health workers, many of whom have personal experience with incarceration themselves. PORT teams provide comprehensive primary care, connections to specialty care, and wraparound services via case management and healthcare navigation. PORT aims to promote better health, wellbeing, and self-efficacy. Call the PORTline to get connected to the practices.

Bellevue Hospital PORT Practice

**462 1st Avenue (at 27th Street), G-1027/Satellite Clinic
New York, NY 10016**

Kings County Hospital PORT Practice

**451 Clarkson Avenue, E Building, 7th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11203**

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—COMMUNITY HEALTH & SOCIAL WORK

10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Telephone: 718.230.2768

www.bklynlibrary.org/outreach/community-health

The Community Health Team connects people to health and wellness services through education and resources, provided through virtual webinars, programming, and community partner events. Key priority areas include Mental Health, Maternal Health & Reproductive Justice, Positive Aging, Nutrition/Healthy Eating, Chronic Conditions Prevention, and Health Literacy. The

Social Work Program coordinates individual referrals for mental health/counseling, food assistance, employment assistance, housing assistance, and health insurance coverage. Call or email healthybklyn@bklynlibrary.org for more information.

Free & Low-Cost Medical Care

MOUNT SINAI INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED MEDICINE— MORNINGSIDE CLINIC—COMING HOME PROGRAM



158 West 124th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 332.243.0100

www.mountsinai.org/patient-care/iam/services/diverse-communities

Offers comprehensive medical and support services for formerly incarcerated individuals ages 18 and over. Provides primary health/medical care, OB/GYN, mental health treatment, dental care, case management, social services, legal services, support groups, substance use counseling, linkage to care, and more. On-site pharmacy services are available. It is helpful to bring ID, insurance card, and medical records to the initial visit. Spanish is spoken with the capacity to serve speakers of other languages via a language line. Offers letters of reassurance.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE (DOH)—SEXUAL HEALTH CLINICS

Hotline: 347.396.7959 (Mon–Fri 9–3:30)

www.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/sexual-health-clinics.page

Offers low- to no-cost services for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, for anyone ages 12 and over, regardless of immigration status. No parental consent is necessary. Medication abortion services are available at the Jamaica, Morrisania, and

Central Harlem clinics only. Call for medical evaluation, counseling, and clinic appointments. Walk-ins are also accepted until 2pm. Call or visit the website for a list of clinic locations across NYC.

THE ALLIANCE FOR POSITIVE CHANGE



64 West 35th Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 212.645.0875 / Testing Hotline: 855.427.2692

<https://alliance.nyc>

Provides services for low-income New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, substance use disorder, mental illness, and other chronic health conditions. Programs include care management, harm reduction and recovery services, HIV and hepatitis C testing, peer education and workforce reentry services, disease prevention and coaching, and supportive housing. Services are free, confidential, and multilingual (Spanish and Mandarin).

THE BEDFORD-STUYVESANT FAMILY HEALTH CENTER



www.bsfhc.org

Bedford Stuyvesant Family Health Center (Main)

1456 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11216

Telephone: 718.636.4500

Broadway Family Health Center

1238 Broadway, Brooklyn, NY 11221

Telephone: 718.443.2428

Women Infants Center (WIC)

20 New York Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11216

Telephone: 718.636.4500

Wellness Center Program

1458 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11216

Telephone: 718.636.4500

Offers a broad range of integrative healthcare services with an

emphasis on prevention, education, and critical support services. Services include dentistry, family planning, family practice, internal medicine, nutrition, obstetrics/gynecology, pediatrics, prenatal care, psychiatry, substance use disorder assessment, and an HIV/AIDS clinic. On-site specialty services include surgical consultation, urology, cardiology, podiatry, and eye care. Telehealth services are also available.

CHARLES B. WANG COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

www.cbwchc.org

Provides primary healthcare and services including pediatric care, dentistry, mental health, OB/GYN, social work services, and health education. Visit the website for contact information, locations and services being offered, hours, and to schedule an appointment. Telehealth services are also available.

COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE NETWORK

60 Madison Avenue, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10010

Telephone: 866.246.8259

www.chnyc.org

A nonprofit network of New York Health Centers with over 10 locations across the Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens, and a Mobile Health Center. Primary care, reproductive health, family planning, STI testing, and comprehensive HIV services are provided. Dental, eye care, mental health, substance use services, foot care, nutrition, exercise classes, prenatal care, pediatrics, mammogram referrals, and cancer screening are also available. Offers sliding scale fees for people without insurance and provides services regardless of ability to pay. Call for more information and the nearest site.

THE INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY HEALTH—THE TRAUMA-INFORMED LINKAGE TO CARE (TLC) CLINIC

230 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 646.946.4482

<https://institute.org/health-care/services/the-tlc-clinic>

Offers sensitive, respectful health care for anyone who has experienced sexual violence, trauma, or exploitation (including sex trafficking, sexual assault, domestic violence, labor trafficking, and those seeking asylum) regardless of age, gender, insurance, or documentation status. Services include routine physicals, OB/GYN and pregnancy care, STI tests, pregnancy tests, birth control, gender-affirming care, diabetes care, and PrEP and HIV care. Also provides care navigation and survivor-led services. Can make referrals for mental health care, dentistry, acupuncture, and more.

NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS—STREET HEALTH OUTREACH & WELLNESS (SHOW) MOBILE UNITS

www.nychealthandhospitals.org/street-health-outreach-wellness-mobile-units

Mobile units offer primary care, wound care, mental health support, harm reduction services, and basic material necessities to homeless people in over seven locations in NYC. Services include basic evaluation of symptoms or health concerns; screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment for substance use disorders, including connection to medication assisted treatment and additional support; overdose training and narcan kit distribution; and hygiene kits, reusable bags, snacks, and water. Visit the website for the most current information on locations, and days and times of services.

General Health Information Resources

NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

www.health.ny.gov/community/advance_care_planning

Provides information on advance care planning, including health care proxies and living wills.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL CONDUCT (OPMC)

150 Broadway, Suite 355, Albany, NY 12204

Telephone: 800.663.6114

www.health.ny.gov/professionals/doctors/conduct

Call or write to make a complaint about a doctor.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/doh

The website provides a variety of information on common health concerns. Articles are written in an easy-to-understand style.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)



1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333

Telephone: 800.232.4636

www.cdc.gov

Provides information on diseases and other health topics including HIV/AIDS, cancer, diabetes, tobacco-related illness, nutrition, and more.

MEDLINE PLUS

www.medlineplus.gov

Provides easy to understand health and wellness information. Also has a medical dictionary, information about drugs and supplements, health news, and directories for hospitals, doctors, and dentists. Information in multiple languages is available on many topics.

Helplines: Physical Health

NYC TUBERCULOSIS PROVIDER HOTLINE

Hotline: 844.713.0559

www.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/health-topics/tuberculosis.page

Provides referrals to free tuberculosis clinics, testing, exams, and treatment.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY HELPLINE

132 West 32nd Street, New York, NY 10001

Helpline: 800.227.2345

www.cancer.org

Cancer Information Specialists are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to answer questions about specific cancers, treatment options, side effects, coping with cancer, medicines, pain control, clinical trials, prevention, screening, and help locating national resources. Information packets and publications can be found on the website.

THE POISON CONTROL CENTER HOTLINE

Hotline: 800.222.1222

NYC Poison Control Center: 212.764.7667

www.poison.org

Poison specialists are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide free, expert, and confidential guidance in a poison emergency. The NYC Poison Control Center provides translation services in more than 150 languages.

Reproductive Health

Family Equality provides resources and information for transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming people, preparing for parenthood including hormones, self-advocacy, and more online at <https://familyequality.org/family-building/trans-family-building>. A directory of LGBTQ+ friendly and affirming family-building providers, including fertility clinics, cryobanks, midwives, doulas, surrogacy clinics, and more is also available.

Scarleteen is an organization that offers support, information,

and education about inclusive sexuality and relationships for young people, as well as a digital clearinghouse, online at www.scarleteen.com.

Pharmacist Dispensed Contraception

In May, 2023 a bill was signed into law that allows New Yorkers to obtain hormonal birth control—the pill, patch, and ring—after consulting with a pharmacist, without a prescription. This allows people who may not have a primary care provider, but do have access to a local pharmacy, access to safe and effective contraception.

Emergency Contraception (EC)

Emergency contraception is a safe way to prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex. There are different types of emergency contraception, and some work better than others. No matter what kind of emergency contraception you use, it is advised to take it as soon as possible after unprotected sex.

People in NYC:

- Can get free EC pills at the Health Department’s Sexual Health Clinics (full entry on [page 124](#)).
- Emergency Contraception is available 24 hours a day at NYC public hospitals. Services are confidential and open to all, regardless of immigration status. To find a location visit www.nychealthandhospitals.org/locations.
- People can buy certain types of EC pills at a pharmacy without a prescription. It costs \$40 to \$50 and may be covered by your insurance. EC pills are covered for Medicaid members.

For more information on types: certain intrauterine devices (IUDs) and pills (aka the morning-after pill) visit www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/morning-after-pill-emergency-contraception/which-kind-emergency-contraception-should-i-use.

NYC HEALTH—ABORTION ACCESS HUB

Telephone: 877.692.2482 (Mon–Fri 8am–8pm)
www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/abortion.page

Provides confidential help finding an abortion provider in NYC,

scheduling an appointment, getting financial assistance, and finding transportation and lodging. Help is available regardless of immigration status. People do not need to live in NYC to contact the Abortion Access Hub or receive a referral. Identifying information is not collected nor recorded and phone numbers are hidden.

The following are tips on avoiding fake clinics

Anti-abortion facilities—sometimes called crisis pregnancy centers or pregnancy resource centers—try to stop people from getting abortions.

Fake clinics that try to stop people from getting abortions will often show up in results of online searches for “abortion clinic” or “abortion pill”. Use the resources on the NYC Health webpage to avoid those places and find an abortion provider who respects your right to seek abortion services.

These fake clinics often:

- Imitate health clinics by using names, banners, and signs that are similar to real clinics.
- Are located near health clinics that provide abortions.
- Are funded by organizations that are opposed to abortion.
- Provide false information about abortion to pregnant people.
- Try to mislead people about how many weeks they have been pregnant.
- Claim to offer free counseling, pregnancy tests, and ultrasounds.
- Fake clinics may offer low-cost resources, such as pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, or baby clothes, but they do not provide abortions. Also, they rarely offer any other medical care. Since they are not licensed health care providers, these facilities are not required by law to keep your personal information private.

NYC law requires these facilities to post a sign in English and Spanish that states they do not have a medical provider on site and do not provide abortion care. If you encounter a fake clinic without this sign posted in English and Spanish, you can file a complaint online or by calling **311**.

NYC HEALTH— DOULA CARE

www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/doula-care.page

Doulas provide non-medical support to pregnant people and their families before, during, and after childbirth. This support can help families handle the physical, emotional, and practical issues that surround childbirth. Visit the website for information on types of doulas, finding, and paying for a doula.

The **Citywide Doula Initiative** provides free access to home visitors and doula support for birthing people and parenting families. Doulas from this initiative provide professional, no-cost doula services to residents of neighborhoods that have been especially affected by COVID-19 in addition to communities that have a high percentage of other health and socioeconomic disparities. For more information, including eligibility, visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/citywide-doula-initiative.page, or call **844.653.6852**.

POSTPARTUM RESOURCE CENTER IN NEW YORK

Helpline: 855.631.0001 or 631.422.2255

<https://postpartumny.org>

Offers support to those affected by a perinatal mood or anxiety disorder like postpartum depression or depression during pregnancy. The helpline is available 7 days a week, 9–5, and calls are returned on the same day. Also provides educational information, healthcare resources, support group resources, and more.

REPRO LEGAL HELPLINE

Helpline: 844.868.2812

www.reprolegalhelpline.org

A free, confidential helpline where people can get legal information or advice about self-managed abortion, young people’s access to abortion or judicial bypass, and referrals to local resources.

Health Insurance

For more information on Medicaid, see [page 112](#) in the chapter *Financial Assistance*.

Effective in 2023, the **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS)** created a **Special Enrollment Period (SEP)** for recently released formerly incarcerated people. The SEP allows formerly incarcerated people to enroll in Medicare in the 12 months following their release without facing any financial penalties for late enrollment. For more information visit www.cms.gov/training-education/look-up-topics/special-populations/incarcerated-medicare-beneficiaries.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—HEALTH PLAN MARKETPLACE

Helpline: 855.355.5777 / TTY: 800.662.1220
<https://nystateofhealth.ny.gov>

The State of New York provides a number of public health insurance programs for eligible residents. Contact for program information and eligibility. The following is information on several kinds of public health insurance in NYC.

Medicaid: a program for New Yorkers who cannot afford to pay for medical care.

Child Health Plus: for New Yorkers under age 19 whose family income is too high to qualify for Medicaid.

Family Planning Benefit Program: provides confidential family planning services to any person of childbearing age and those who meet certain income and residency requirements.

Medicaid Buy-In Program for Working People with Disabilities: a program for people with disabilities who are working and earning more than the income limit for regular Medicaid, allowing people to keep their healthcare coverage through Medicaid.

Prenatal Care Assistance Program: includes specific plans for pregnant New Yorkers.

HIV Special Needs Plan: for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Medicare: for adults ages 65 and over.

If a child is uninsured, help paying for treatment may be available through public health insurance. To request help, call the **NYC Human Resources Administration, Department of Social Services** at **718.557.1399**.

Those who do not have health insurance but are working and making too much money to qualify for the programs above may contact the NYS Department of Health. Call the helpline Mon–Fri 8–8, Sat 9–1, or visit the website for information on purchasing private plans, as well as how to apply for assistance in lowering the cost of insurance.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY (CSS)

Helpline: 888.614.5400

Staff can help enroll participants in free or affordable health insurance, apply for financial assistance to pay for health insurance, compare and understand different health insurance options, and renew New York Health Marketplace coverage. Also provides a specialized program to help individuals access insurance and care for mental health and substance use disorders. Services are free and confidential.

See the full listing for Community Service Society on [page 117](#).

HIV & AIDS

NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—HIV/AIDS INFORMATION 

General Information: 800.541.2437 / Spanish: 800.233.7432

www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids

Provides taped information on prevention, diagnosis, and treat-

ment of HIV/AIDS. Provides referrals to testing, counseling programs, and treatment facilities.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE (DOH) 

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/aids-hiv.page

Visit the website for brochures and information on AIDS in English or Spanish. Also provides information on how to order a free home test kit to check HIV status, and updated information on clinics and organizations that provide direct services. For those who need emergency post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) to prevent HIV, call the **NYC PEP Hotline** at **844.373.7692**.

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION—HIV/AIDS SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (HASA) 

Telephone: 718.557.1399 / TTY: 212.971.2731

www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/hiv-aids-services.page

Call for confidential information on AIDS and HIV testing and service referrals.


NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—THE HIV UNINSURED CARE PROGRAMS 

Empire Station, PO Box 2052, Albany, NY 12220

Telephone: 800.542.2437

www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/resources/adap

Programs provide access to free healthcare for uninsured or underinsured NYS residents living with HIV. Services help provide access to HIV and AIDS medications. The application can be downloaded from the website or requested by phone.

ARGUS COMMUNITY—ACCESS PROGRAM 

Telephone: 718.401.5734

Provides intensive case management and services for people living with HIV. Assistance with medical care, housing, access to ben-

efits, legal help, and other needs is provided. Call to schedule an appointment.

See the full listing for Argus on [page 168](#).

BOOM!HEALTH

Telephone: 718.295.2666

www.boomhealth.org

Harm Reduction Center
226 East 144th Street, Bronx, NY 10451

Wellness Center
3144 3rd Avenue, Bronx, NY 10451

The Harm Reduction Center services include meals, showers, clothing, laundry, safe space, daily support and education groups, rapid HIV testing, rapid hepatitis C screening, hepatitis A and B vaccines, syringe services, case management services, counseling, connection to healthcare, medication, and more.

The Wellness Center services include healthcare linkage and navigation, health education, supportive counseling, outreach and testing, condom distribution, youth drop-in, PrEP/PEP education and linkage, and health insurance education and access.

BRIDGING ACCESS TO CARE

www.bac-ny.org

2261 Church Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226
Telephone: 347.505.5176

390 Berry Street, Floors 2 and 3, Brooklyn, NY 11249
Telephone: 347.505.5120

A multi-service, community-based behavioral health care organization. Services include primary health care; case management for people living with HIV, those living with mental illness, or are former substance users; STI, HIV and hepatitis C testing; psy-

chiatric evaluations; individual and group therapy; and smoking cessation. Telehealth support is also available. Individual counseling is available for children who are over the age of six. Also provides supportive housing with case management with a priority on providing shelter to individuals with chronic medical conditions, mental health conditions, a history of substance use, young parents, as well as those who have been formerly homeless or formerly incarcerated.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ACTION OF STATEN ISLAND 

56 Bay Street, Staten Island, NY 10301

Telephone: 718.808.1300

<https://chasinny.org>

Offers rapid HIV testing and case management to people living with HIV, hepatitis B and C screening and testing, and health screenings. Reentry support for people on parole, as well as support groups, domestic violence and trauma services tailored for families and LGBTQ survivors, job-search assistance, housing assistance, counseling, naloxone (Narcan) training, a food pantry/mobile food pantry, and a medically supervised outpatient program for clients dealing with substance use disorder. Services are free and confidential. Contact for service locations and information on the mobile food pantry.

FORGING AHEAD FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT (FACES)  

123 West 115th Street, New York, NY 10026

Telephone: 212.663.7772

www.facesny.org

Provides free services to New Yorkers, including those who are chronically homeless, living with HIV/AIDS, living with substance use disorder or living with mental illness, and court-involved individuals. Primary services include housing; HIV/AIDS/hepatitis prevention, testing, and counseling; and reentry services for court-involved people. Support services include case management,

substance use disorder and mental health services, treatment adherence, entitlement advocacy and representation, vocational/educational assessment, food and nutrition programs, and health and wellness counseling. Ancillary services include art therapy, recreational activities, and after-school care for children.

THE FORTUNE SOCIETY   

29-76 Northern Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101
Telephone: 212.691.7554
<https://fortunesociety.org>

Offers a range of health services to people with a history of incarceration or touchpoint with the criminal legal system, including outpatient mental health and substance use counseling, and help obtaining medical insurance and connecting participants to medical services, with tailored services available for people living with HIV. Meals are also provided for all participants. Contact for intake information.

See the full listing for The Fortune Society on [page 31](#).

GMHC 

307 West 38th Street, New York, NY 10018
Telephone: 212.367.1000 / Hotline: 800.243.7692
www.gmhc.org

Provides direct services and support for New Yorkers, including youth, transgender, and gender nonconforming people, living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. Offers one-on-one counseling and support groups for people living with HIV and AIDS and their loved ones. Other programs include financial and legal counseling, educational workshops and trainings, workforce development, mental health services including psychiatric care, substance use counseling, a food pantry, housing assistance, and public education and advocacy efforts. Offers free HIV/STI testing at the Testing Center, as well as free HIV self-test kits with the support of a counselor.

Free brochures and information on HIV and AIDS in English or Spanish are available upon request.

HAITIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY COALITION (HCC) 

3807–3809 Church Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11203
Telephone: 718.940.2200
www.hccinc.org

Provides services to people and families who are low-income, houseless, and mainly of Caribbean descent. Services include health and fitness programs, adult literacy instruction, housing placement assistance, social services navigation and sign up, document translation services (at a cost), HIV/AIDS testing and prevention education (including PrEP/PEP), and mental health counseling at the Be Well Center. French, Creole, and Spanish are spoken.

THE HISPANIC AIDS FORUM, INC. 

975 Kelly Street, Suite 201, Bronx, NY 10459
Telephone: 718.328.4188
<https://hafnyc.org>

Provides information, counseling, and support groups for anyone with questions about HIV or AIDS. Offers rental assistance resources, case management, and LGBTQIA+ specific health and support services. Provides referrals and free HIV testing. Write or call for free brochures. Call to make an appointment.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF NYC—PROJECT STREET BEAT

www.projectstreetbeat.org

Provides confidential healthcare, counseling, and support to adults and young people. Services are available to all genders, regardless of immigration status or ability to pay. Mobile van services include STI screening and treatment, hepatitis C screening, HIV testing and

counseling, needle exchange and overdose prevention counseling, wellness exams, and gynecologic care. Outside the mobile van, case management is also available including support groups for various groups including injection drug users and those in recovery, and people living with HIV. Visit the website for information on mobile unit hours and locations.

AIDS Discrimination

PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICES OF NEW YORK (PLSNY)



Provides free legal services to incarcerated people in NYS prisons, with regional offices in Albany, Buffalo, Ithaca, and Newburgh.

See the full listing for PLSNY on [page 207](#).

NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Contact to file a complaint of discrimination in employment, housing, and/or public accommodations based on age, race, color, religion/creed, natural hair or hairstyles, actual or perceived height or weight, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, gender (including sexual harassment), gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, veteran or active military service member status, pregnancy, marital status, and partnership status.

See the full listing for NYC Commission on Human Rights on [page 233](#).

Hepatitis C

AMERICAN LIVER FOUNDATION

Helpline: 800.465.4837

<https://liverfoundation.org>

Provides printed information on liver disease, including hepatitis C and HIV/HCV coinfection, as well as referrals to support groups for people with HCV, community health centers, and liver specialists in the New York area.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)—DIVISION OF VIRAL HEPATITIS

Telephone: 800.232.4636

www.cdc.gov/hepatitis

Provides information and publications about hepatitis C and HIV/HCV coinfection.

COVID-19

It is important to stay aware of the latest COVID-19 information by regularly checking updates from national and local public health authorities, as experts say we are in the process of shifting from the pandemic to endemic phase.

The federal government declared an end to the public health emergency for COVID-19 in 2023, which means that free services are now limited.

For the most recent information and updates on COVID-19, including data by area, variant information, vaccines, vaccination sites, testing sites, symptoms, prevention, mask guidelines, treatments, and more, contact:

For **New York State** visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

For **New York City** visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page.

Information on COVID-19

It is important to get information and updates about COVID-19 from reliable sources.

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** is an agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health. WHO's COVID-19 information page is available at www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019. The website has a question and answer section providing information on many topics including vaccines, variants, youth, pregnancy, breastfeeding, cleaning and disinfection, contraceptives and family planning, homecare, tips for health and safety, and more. They also have a mythbusters page providing factual information on rumors and misinformation about COVID-19.

Anyone can get COVID-19 and spread COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself and others is to stay up-to-date with vaccinations and to follow masking and physical distancing guidelines.

COVID-19 is primarily transmitted from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. These droplets are released when someone with COVID-19 breathes, sneezes, coughs, or talks.

Not everyone develops symptoms, but even asymptomatic people can spread COVID-19, including to those who are at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Scientists and doctors are still learning about COVID-19 and the long-term effects it can have.

Prevention measures to decrease the spread of COVID-19 include:

- Stay up-to-date with vaccinations, if you are medically able to do so.
- Wear a high-quality mask in public indoor settings and around crowds outside.
- Practice physical distancing as much as possible, when transmission rates are high.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Keep your hands clean: frequently wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover your mouth by coughing or sneezing into your sleeve or a tissue, and discard tissues in a closed container.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects.

- Test before and after travel or gatherings, or if you were recently exposed to someone who has COVID-19.

Along with following these prevention measures, WHO recommends avoiding the “3C’s” to minimize the risks of COVID-19.

When considering activities; avoid:

- Closed spaces with poor ventilation.
- Crowded places with many people nearby.
- Close contact, such as close-range conversations.

The risk of getting COVID-19 is higher in crowded and inadequately ventilated spaces where people spend long periods of time together in close proximity. These environments are where the virus appears to spread by respiratory droplets and aerosols more efficiently.

Face Coverings

Wearing a high-quality mask helps prevent the spread of COVID-19 by:

- Protecting the wearer, by reducing their exposure to respiratory particles that may contain the virus.
- Protecting others, by reducing the amount of respiratory particles that enter the air when someone with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, talks, or breathes.

COVID-19 Tests

Testing remains an important part of reducing the spread of COVID-19. All New Yorkers should get tested for COVID-19 if they have symptoms or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19.

For more information about COVID-19 testing:

For **New York State** visit <https://forward.ny.gov/covid-19-testing>.

For **New York City** visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-rapid-testing.page.

It is advised you check with the testing site and your insurer in advance of being tested to confirm you will not be responsible for any fees associated with your test.

Expiration dates for some at-home testing kits have been extended. The FDA has created a searchable chart, available at

www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/home-otc-covid-19-diagnostic-tests, to look up brands of test kits for more information. If a test kit's expiration date has been updated, a link will be present to take you to another webpage to search by the lot number of the test kit for updated information.

Vaccines

According to medical experts, the best way to protect yourself from becoming seriously ill from COVID-19 is by getting and staying up-to-date with the vaccine. It is possible to get COVID-19 multiple times, so even people who have had COVID-19 should get a vaccine and boosters. The vaccines are safe and highly effective at preventing serious illness or death from COVID-19.

In March 2021, a judge in New York Supreme Court ruled that every person incarcerated in NYS jails or prisons, must be offered the vaccine.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccines, including how many doses are needed to be up-to-date, additional doses and booster shots, and vaccines offered by age group, visit www.cdc.gov/covid/vaccines/index.html.

Schedule a Vaccine Appointment

For information about COVID-19 vaccines, including locations and appointments:

For **New York State** visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-0>.

For **New York City** visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines.page.

DISABILITY INFORMATION AND ACCESS LINE (DIAL)

Telephone: 888.677.1199 (Mon–Fri 8am–9pm)

www.acl.gov/DIAL

A hotline available to help people with disabilities get vaccinated. Trained staff can help find local vaccination locations, assist with making vaccination appointments, and connect callers to local services, such as accessible transportation, to overcome barriers to vaccination. Also provides information and resources to answer

questions about vaccines and connect callers to information and services that promote independent living, and address fundamental needs, such as food, housing, and transportation.

COVID-19 Treatment

New Yorkers who test positive for COVID-19 can seek treatment that helps prevent severe disease. The treatment works best when you receive it as soon as possible after becoming sick.

For more information visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-treatments>. New York City residents who test positive and do not have a health care provider should call **311**.

Post COVID-19 Care & Long COVID

The long-term effects of COVID-19 are still being studied, and the virus can affect many different systems in the body. Some people who had COVID-19, whether they needed hospitalization or not, continue to experience a wide range of ongoing symptoms that can last weeks, months, or years after first being infected, or may have new or recurring symptoms at a later time. This includes fatigue, respiratory and neurological symptoms, and more. This is known as post-acute COVID-19 syndrome, also called Long COVID or chronic COVID.

For more information on Long COVID or Post-COVID conditions visit www.cdc.gov/covid/hcp/clinical-overview/index.html or www.health.ny.gov/diseases/long_covid.

The **NYC Health + Hospitals AfterCare Resource Center** provides resources and information on obtaining healthcare and other support available at www.nychealthandhospitals.org/after-care/long-covid.

Long COVID can be a disability under the ADA, Section 504, and Section 1557 if it substantially limits one or more major life activities. For information and guidance about disability and Long COVID, visit www.hhs.gov/civil-rights/for-providers/civil-rights-covid19/guidance-long-covid-disability/index.html.

For help with disability and other benefits and issues, call the **Legal Aid Society's Access to Benefits (A2B) Helpline** at **888.663.6880**, Mon–Fri 10am–3pm.

BODY POLITIC—COVID-19

www.wearebodypolitic.com

Provides a vetted list of patient led support groups for people who are experiencing symptoms of or are recovering from COVID-19. Also provides informational resources on Long COVID, exercise and pacing, dysautonomia, employment and disabilities benefits, emotional and peer support, and more.

NYS OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH—COVID-19 RESOURCES

<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/covid-19-resources.html>

The website provides informational resources for people about the vaccines, managing anxiety and tips for mental health, grief support, and provider resources.

BURIAL ASSISTANCE

www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/burial-assistance.page

Visit the website for information on burial assistance and financial help for COVID-19 related funeral expenses, including information about the FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance program which will provide funeral assistance until September 30, 2025.

Mental Health

Any person in need of psychiatric help can report to the emergency room of any municipal hospital, even without health insurance. Hospitals make referrals, link people to outpatient programs, and can help with medication if necessary.

Psychiatric Advance Directive (PAD)

A Psychiatric Advance Directive, also known as a mental health advance directive, is a written document that describes how you want your mental health care to be given if, in the future, you are judged unable to tell your care provider those decisions for yourself. The PAD can let others know about what treatments you want or don't want from psychiatrists or other mental health professionals, and it can identify a person who will be able to make decisions on your behalf. For more information, including a sample PAD, visit <https://nyc988.cityofnewyork.us/en/crisis-services/psychiatric-advance-directives>.

Crisis Respite Centers

NYC Short-term Crisis Respite Centers support people ages 18 and over who are anticipating or experiencing a mental health crisis by providing a voluntary stay in a home-like setting as an alternative to hospitalization. Support services are offered by trained peers and non-peers. People can stay for up to one week in an open-door setting to continue daily activities. For more information, including locations, visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/crisis-emergency-services-respite-centers.page.

NYS OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH—BRONX PSYCHIATRIC CENTER

1500 Waters Place, Bronx, NY 10461

Telephone: 718.931.0600

<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/facilities/brpc>

Provides inpatient and outpatient psychiatric intervention and supportive counseling to individuals with serious mental illness. No referral necessary.

BALTIC STREET WELLNESS SOLUTIONS



Main Office: 9 Bond Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 718.833.5929

<https://balticstreet.org>

Helps adults ages 18 and over who have a history of lived mental health experience or are currently managing a diagnosis by offering job skills training, work-readiness support, and help with finding and keeping a job. Also assists with housing placement, benefits advocacy, social support groups, and provides referrals to educational supports. Contact to learn more about services and locations.

CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (CASES)—NATHANIEL CLINICS



www.cases.org

Telephone: 212.553.6708

Nathaniel Clinic—Bronx

424 East 147th Street, 1st Floor, Bronx, NY 10455

Nathaniel Clinic—Harlem

2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10027

Provides specialty mental health services for court-involved individuals ages 13 and over. Services include reentry care, social work and psychiatric assessment, individual/group/family psychotherapy, medication management, crisis intervention, case management, peer support, substance use counseling, and connections to primary care and medication assisted substance use treatment. Contact for availability and appointments.

See the full listing for CASES on [page 26](#).

COMMUNITY ACCESS

Telephone: 212.780.1400

www.communityaccess.org

Blueprint Supported Education

2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., 12th Floor, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 646.503.5600

Provides a range of services to people living with mental health concerns including supportive housing, education and job training, health and wellness programs, and advocacy.

The Blueprint Supported Education program provides assistance with school admissions and financial planning, course registration, skill development in studying, note-taking, test-taking, time and

stress management, employment, internship, and volunteer opportunities, and more.

The Howie the Harp Peer Training program provides an intensive, multi-week instruction series developed to train people with experience in mental health recovery to become peer support workers in the human service sector. To apply, applicants must have a mental health diagnosis, have earned a high school diploma or equivalent, be able to work in the US, and live in NYC. Applicants also need to submit a resume and two references. Classes are conducted in English.

East Village Access (EVA) is a mental health treatment and recovery program for adults. Services include medication management, health and psychiatric assessment, clinical counseling and therapy, symptom monitoring, rehabilitation and support, and long-term support.

Also runs the **Adult Crisis Residence**, an alternative to emergency hospitalization for individuals ages 21 and over experiencing crisis. Call **646.257.5665 (then press 0)** for more information.

FOUNTAIN HOUSE

425 West 47th Street, New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212.582.0340

www.fountainhouse.org

Provides a community-based, restorative environment for people who are living with mental illness. Offers specific senior programs, pre-vocational day programs, transitional employment opportunities, a full-time employment program, subsidized food, recreation, housing alternatives, and support for members who are interested in being peer specialists. Call for membership details.

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES—BRONX ACE PROGRAM & PAL PROGRAM

NYC Main Office: 25 Elm Place, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 718.728.5400

<https://goodwillnynj.org>

The Bronx Assisted Competitive Employment (ACE) program offers supported employment services to adults ages 18 and over with documented mental health and co-occurring substance use diagnoses. Services include vocational assessment, career planning, one-on-one counseling, job development and job placement, support in the community and in the workplace, employment incentives at various stages of employment, and retention support. Also has a Peer Advocacy Leadership (PAL) Program where professionally trained peers collaborate with participants to help with educational and/or vocational goals, support obtaining housing through the 2010e application, benefits support and advocacy, and more.

THE JEWISH BOARD—MENTAL HEALTH CLINICS

Headquarters: 463 7th Avenue, 18th Floor, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.582.9100 / Toll-free: 888.523.2769

Hotline: 844.663.2255

<https://jewishboard.org>

Provides individual, couple, family, and group therapy, as well as evaluation, assessment, and medication management for New Yorkers in 14 clinics and 24 additional satellite clinics throughout NYC. Programs for children, teens, trauma survivors, and those with intellectual and developmental disabilities are also available. Services include care coordination, supportive housing, addiction support, job training, and domestic violence advocacy and crisis intervention. Accepts Medicaid and offers sliding scale fees. Services are available in multiple languages. Telehealth services are available.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI)—NYC METRO

307 West 38th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10018

NYC Helpline: 212.684.3264

<https://naminycmetro.org>

Provides free, peer-led, peer-run classes, support and social groups, family mentoring, and more for individuals and families affected by mental illness. The Helpline is available Mon–Fri 10–6, in 180 languages, to answer any questions about mental health. Can also provide referrals for mental health services, housing, and legal assistance. Visit the website for updated summer and holiday hours.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH—INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER 

Mailing Address: National Institute of Mental Health, Office of Science Policy, Planning, and Communications, 6001 Executive Boulevard, MSC 9663 , Bethesda, MD 20892
Telephone: 866.615.6464
www.nimh.nih.gov

Provides information on a range of mental health topics. The website offers a live online chat feature to field inquiries during business hours.

REVCORE RECOVERY CENTER   

Telephone: 212.966.9537
<https://revcorerecovery.com>

15 2nd Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215

394 Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10013

37-20 74th Street, 3rd Floor, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

A network of NYS licensed outpatient facilities providing treatment and support services for individuals with substance use disorders and/or mental illness. Offers recovery coaching, job assistance, physical health connections, help applying for jobs and housing, and other case management functions. Open 7 days a week and offers evening programming. No wait for admissions appointments.

Accepts Medicaid and offers sliding scale fees. Telehealth services available. Also provides in-the-field community-based services in Harlem and several shelters around the city.

SERVICES FOR THE UNDERSERVED (S:US) 

463 7th Avenue, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018
Telephone: 212.633.6900 / Intake Services: 877.583.5336
<https://sus.org>

A nonprofit human services agency that offers housing, treatment and rehabilitation, skill-building, and care coordination for New Yorkers.

VENTURE HOUSE  

www.venturehouse.org

VH Bronx
2490-2494 Elm Place, 2nd Floor, Bronx, NY 10458
Telephone: 646.214.8164

VH Brooklyn
885 Rogers Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226

VH Brooklyn (Young Adult Housing)
753 East 88th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11236
Telephone: 929.226.2416

VH Queens
150-10 Hillside Avenue, Jamaica, NY, 11432
Telephone: 718.658.7201

VH Staten Island
1442 Castleton Avenue, Staten Island, NY, 10302
Telephone: 718.658.7821

A citywide community-based nonprofit mental health agency serving adults living with mental illness utilizing the Clubhouse Model of psychosocial rehabilitation. Offers job development/

coaching, supported education services, supportive housing, virtual programming, wellness activities and social events, including on weekends, evenings, and holidays. Members work alongside staff managing daily operations, including reception, building maintenance/custodial tasks, clerical duties, newsletter/media, podcasts, data tracking/entry, kitchen and dining services, basic computer literacy, and more. Visit the website for the most up-to-date information on programs and services.

Resources & Counseling Related to Sexual Violence

Anyone in NYC in need of support can call **Safe Horizon's 24-hour Hotline** at **800.621.4673** for immediate assistance.

More crisis helplines can be found in the *LGBTQI+*, *People with Disabilities*, *Veterans*, *Women*, and *Youth* chapters.

The **New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault** provides a resource guide which includes a variety of different resources available to survivors and victims of any form of sexual violence, as well as for children and families impacted by violence, available online at <https://svfreenyc.org/resource-guide>.

JUST DETENTION INTERNATIONAL 

3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010
Telephone: 213.384.1400
<https://justdetention.org>

A health and human rights organization that advocates to end sexual abuse in all forms of detention. Call, mail, or visit the website for information and resource guides for survivors of sexual violence, and a state-by-state guide to legal services and psychological counseling resources for survivors who are still incarcerated, those who have been released, and their loved ones.

Incarcerated people can call **213.384.1400 x110**, or may write to the below address for a Survivor Packet via confidential, legal mail:

Cynthia Totten, Attorney at Law
CA Attorney Reg. #199266
3250 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1630
Los Angeles, CA 90010

The Survivor Packet includes Hope for Healing, a self-help guide for survivors as they rebuild their lives after an assault. The packet also includes contact information for local sexual assault crisis centers and legal aid organizations, as well as information about how to report abuse and survivors' rights.

MUSTARD SEED COUNSELING SERVICES

1118 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11216
Telephone: 718.875.7411
www.mustardseedforensic.com

Provides assessment and treatment for individuals charged with or convicted of a sexual offense, or those involved in sexual behaviors that interfere with personal and work relationships. Call for more information on hours and fees.

NEW YORK COUNSELING FOR CHANGE

30-46 Northern Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101
Telephone: 718.424.6191
www.nyc4c.org

Provides services focused on addressing problematic sexual behaviors, intimate partner violence, family violence, community violence, animal abuse/neglect, and bias incidents. All clients attend group and individual services. Most services are offered via telehealth and limited in-person appointments are available by request. Visit the website for insurance information and group meeting details.

SHILOH CONSULTING  

566 7th Avenue, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10018**Telephone: 212.564.7631**www.shilohconsultingllc.com

An Article 31 OMH Outpatient Clinic that provides sex offense treatment. Services provided include SIST (Strict Intensive Supervision and Treatment), Anger Management, Pre-Contemplation (Stage 1), Contemplation (Stage 2), Preparation (Stage 3), Action (Stage 4), Maintenance (Stage 5), MISO (Mentally Ill Sex Offenders), Internet Offenders, Socialization Group, Substance Use Disorders, Hearing Impaired, Social Interactions, Domestic Violence and Anger Management (as mandated), and Individual and Couples Counseling, as well as psychiatric services. Telehealth services are available.

STOP IT NOW! 

351 Pleasant Street, Suite B-319, Northampton, MA 01060**Telephone: 413.587.3500 / Helpline: 888.773.8368**www.stopitnow.org

The helpline provides free, confidential, and direct support and information to individuals with questions or concerns about child sexual abuse. Available Mon 12–8; Tues, Wed, and Fri 12–6; and Thu 10–6. All calls are confidential and will be answered by a trained staff member. Visit the website for resource guides, an online help center, an advice column, and prevention tools.

1IN6 

Headquarters: 366 Jackson Street, Suite 300, St. Paul, MN 55101**RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800.656.4673**<https://1in6.org>

Offers a wide range of information and services for men with histories of unwanted or abusive sexual experiences, and anyone who

cares about them, including free and confidential weekly online support groups for men who have experienced sexual abuse or assault, trauma-informed trainings and webinars, resources and information, and more. Call to speak with a trained advocate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

A CALL FOR CHANGE

Helpline: 877.898.3411

<https://acallforchangehelpline.org>

A free, anonymous, and confidential intimate partner abuse prevention helpline for people who want to stop using abuse and control in their intimate relationships. If a caller gives identifying information and a crime is disclosed, the Helpline will follow legal duty to report requirements. The Helpline operates 365 days a year, 10am–10pm; voicemails are returned within 24 hours.

ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)

Offers free and confidential short-term crisis counseling and support services to the LGBTQI+ community and people living with HIV who are survivors of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and hate violence.

See the full listing for AVP on [page 314](#).

CRIME VICTIMS TREATMENT CENTER (CVTC)

40 Exchange Place, Suite 510, New York, NY 10005

Telephone: 212.523.4728 / Legal Helpline: 212.683.0605

www.cvtcnyc.org

Provides medical, legal, and psychological support for survivors of sexual assault and interpersonal violence. Services include crisis intervention, individual and group trauma-focused therapy, legal advocacy, and complementary therapy and psychiatric consultation. All services are confidential and free of charge. Telehealth

and in-person services are available. Call to schedule an intake appointment.

MALESURVIVOR

PO Box 276, Long Valley, NJ 07853

<https://malesurvivor.org>

Provides support and resources for male survivors of sexual trauma.

Helplines & Other Mental Health Resources

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

Lifeline: 988

<https://988lifeline.org>

A national network of local crisis centers that provides free and emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Be aware that according to policy, when a counselor feels a caller might be at “imminent risk” of harming themselves, emergency services, which may be the police, will be called, and can result in involuntary psychiatric detention.

CALL BLACKLINE

Hotline: 800.604.5841

www.callblackline.com

A hotline geared towards the Black, Black LGBTQI, Brown, Native, and Muslim community. Provides people with an anonymous and confidential avenue to report negative, physical, and inappropriate contact with police and vigilantes. Can provide immediate crisis counseling to those who call upset, need to talk with someone immediately, or are in distress. All calls remain private and will never be shared with law enforcement or state agencies of any kind.

PEER SUPPORT SPACE

<https://peersupportspace.org>

A peer-led organization where support is provided by people with lived experience with mental illness and/or substance misuse challenges, neurodivergence, disability, grief, trauma, or other obstacles to mental wellness. Virtual support groups for people ages 18 and over are held at 12pm and 6pm Mon–Sat. Visit the website for more information on meetings.

PROJECT LETS

Telephone: 401.400.2905

<https://projectlets.org>

A national grassroots organization and movement led by and for people with lived experience of mental illness/madness, disability, trauma, and neurodivergence. Offers Peer Mental Health Advocacy (PMHA) and urgent support with psychiatric incarceration/involuntary hospitalization. Visit the website for more information on programs and resources.

ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (ADAA)

<https://adaa.org>

The website provides information on prevention, treatment, and symptoms of anxiety, depression, and related conditions. Not a direct service agency.

**CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH ATTENTION-DEFICIT/
HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (CHADD) **

Telephone: 866.200.8098

<https://chadd.org>

Provides information and referrals on ADHD, including local support groups. Information specialists are available Mon–Fri 1–5.

DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR SUPPORT ALLIANCE (DBSA)

www.dbsalliance.org

Provides information on bipolar disorder and depression, and in-person and online support groups and forums.

DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE 

Helpline: 800.985.5990

www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline

Provides crisis support services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to

all residents in the US and its territories who are experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.

INTERNATIONAL OCD FOUNDATION

<https://iocdf.org>

The website provides information on OCD and a resource directory searchable by location.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ANOREXIA NERVOSA & ASSOCIATED DISORDERS (ANAD)

PO Box 409047, Chicago, IL 60640

Helpline: 888.375.7767

<https://anad.org>

Provides free, peer support services to anyone struggling with an eating disorder. The helpline is available Mon–Fri 10–10 (Mon–Fri 9–9 CST).

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS ASSOCIATION (NEDA)

www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

The website provides information to individuals and families affected by eating disorders. A database of treatment providers across the country searchable by zip code and tools to look for support groups are available online.

SCHIZOPHRENIA & PSYCHOSIS ACTION ALLIANCE

Toll-free: 800.493.2094

<https://sczaction.org>

Offers free, personalized information and resources to people with schizophrenia-related illnesses and their families.

TARA

Helpline: 888.482.7227

www.tara4bpd.org

Offers a referral center for information, support, education, and treatment options for Borderline Personality Disorder.

NYC MOBILE CRISIS TEAMS (MCT)

<https://nyc988.cityofnewyork.us/en/crisis-services/mobile-crisis-teams>

A mobile crisis team is a group of health professionals, such as

nurses, social workers, and psychiatrists, who can provide mental health services, primarily in people's homes.

MCTs provide services 7 days a week 8am–8pm. MCTs aim to respond to all referrals within several hours of receiving the referral. Factors that may impact response time include:

- Information from the referral source about the best time to find and engage the person in crisis
- Multiple referrals received at approximately the same time resulting in a need to triage depending upon the situation
- Traffic
- Difficulty gaining entrance into the building/apartment/home

MCTs rely on a combination of public funding and insurance revenue to sustain their operations. Therefore, the MCT will collect insurance information and submit claims to your insurance provider for services rendered.

Requesting a team

To request a team, call **988**. If you are calling from area codes 212, 718, 646, 917, 347, 929 you will reach NYC 988. If you are calling from a different area code and you want to reach NYC 988, you can request to be transferred to NYC 988.

People can request help from a mobile crisis team if they are concerned about a family member, friend, or acquaintance who is experiencing (or at risk of) a psychological crisis. People can also request a team for themselves. Counselors will assess the person/situation and provide an appropriate intervention.

Be aware that a trained counselor will help to assess the next steps, which may include calling 911 and involving the police.

Services Provided

Mobile crisis teams can provide mental health engagement, intervention, and follow-up support, including help to overcome resistance to treatment. Depending on what a person is willing to accept, the teams may offer a range of services, including:

- Assessment
- Crisis intervention
- Supportive counseling

- Information and referrals, including to community-based mental health services

Transport to Psychiatric Emergency Room

If a mobile crisis team determines that a person in crisis needs further psychiatric or medical assessment, they can transport that person to a hospital psychiatric emergency room. Mobile crisis teams may direct police to take a person to an emergency room against their will only if they have a mental illness (or the appearance of mental illness) and are a danger to themselves or others. This is in accordance with NYS Mental Hygiene Law.

Therapy Resources

Therapy can be expensive, but there are options for low-cost therapy or alternatives. When looking for a therapist, find out what type of insurance they accept, for instance private insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare, and ask if they offer sliding scale fees. Check out local colleges and universities with mental health practitioner programs as they may provide services that offer reduced rates where graduate students work under the supervision of experienced professionals. Group therapy or support groups can be a more affordable alternative to one-on-one therapy, and many organizations in *Connections* offer this service at low- or no-cost. The Low-cost therapy in New York City website provides a listing of resources available at <https://lowcosttherapy.nyc>. The following are some online resources to find therapists.

LATINX THERAPY

<https://latinxtherapy.com>

An organization working to destigmatize mental health in the Latinx community. Maintains a national online directory to find a Latinx therapist (98% are Spanish speakers) and also offers culturally-grounded workshops. The website provides additional wellness resources and a bilingual podcast that discusses mental health topics.

NATIONAL QUEER AND TRANS THERAPISTS OF COLOR NETWORK (NQTTCN)

<https://nqttcn.com>

A healing justice organization committed to transforming mental health for queer and trans people of color (QTPoC). The website provides an online directory to help QTPoC locate QTPoC mental health practitioners across the country, searchable by zip code; community resources including crisis hotlines, online support, directories, and organizations; and financial assistance through the Mental Health Fund.

THERAPY FOR BLACK GIRLS

<https://therapyforblackgirls.com>

An online space dedicated to encouraging the mental wellness of Black women and girls. Maintains an online directory of therapists searchable by location. The website provides additional wellness resources and a podcast that discusses mental health topics.

THERAPY FOR BLACK MEN

<https://therapyforblackmen.org>

Maintains a directory of therapists and coaches who can provide judgment-free, multiculturally-competent care to Black men, searchable by location, specialization, and other detailed criteria to fit individual needs. Other resources available on the website include stories, articles, an application to financial assistance for therapy sessions, and more.

Addiction

I HAVE NO MERCY OR COMPASSION IN ME FOR A SOCIETY THAT WILL CRUSH PEOPLE, AND THEN PENALIZE THEM FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO STAND UP UNDER THE WEIGHT.

— MALCOLM X



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY PATRICK F. HUGHES

Treatment Programs & Organizations

Substance use disorder treatment programs are either drug-free programs (ambulatory or residential) or dependence maintenance programs, of which methadone treatment clinics are an example.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION—BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT SERVICES LOCATOR

<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>

An online directory for treatment programs throughout the country searchable by address, city, or zip code.

NYS OFFICE OF ADDICTION SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (OASAS)

ES

Helpline: 877.846.7369

<https://oasas.ny.gov>

Provides information and referrals to state-certified treatment programs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The online treatment availability dashboard is searchable by location and available at <https://findaddictiontreatment.ny.gov>.

ADDICTION CARE INTERVENTIONS (ACI) ES

<https://acirehab.org>

Inpatient Services: 589 Rockaway Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11212
Telephone: 212.293.3000 or 800.724.4444

Outpatient Services: 255 West 36th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10018
Telephone: 212.378.4545 or 866.378.4545

Treatment centers for people ages 18 and over. Provides medical, psychiatric, and withdrawal management services along with individual, group, family, and couples counseling. Offers NYS OASAS approved DWI and DUI counseling, treatment, screening, and assessment to individuals charged with a DWI and ordered to

receive screening and/or assessments. Medicaid accepted. Walk-ins are accepted, but calling in advance is strongly recommended.

BROOKLYN CENTER FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY—NEW DIRECTIONS SUBSTANCE USE CLINIC



300 Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Substance Use Clinic: 718.398.0800

Psychotherapy Clinic: 718.622.2000

<https://newdirectionsbrooklyn.com>

An outpatient treatment program. Services include individual and group counseling, family and couples counseling, anger management, art therapy, vocational/educational evaluation, and consultation. Provides services for DWI and domestic violence issues. Specialized services for court-involved individuals include individual and group counseling, supervised urinalysis and breathalyzer screening, and anger management, as well as domestic violence, parenting skills, and other educational counseling workshops. Accepts most insurance and Medicaid. Offers sliding scale fees. Telehealth services are available.

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES (CCA)—CROSSROADS



An OASAS-licensed integrated substance use treatment program, for individuals impacted by the criminal legal system. Treatment interventions are trauma-informed, client-centered, and utilize evidence-based practices. Services offered include individual and group counseling, medication assisted treatment, mental health counseling, cognitive behavioral interventions, employment services, drug testing, health education, HIV and hepatitis C testing, and court advocacy services. Provides FDA-approved medications for the maintenance treatment of opioid use disorder (OUD), including methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone. MAT services are offered in combination with comprehensive OUD psychosocial services, including all services listed above.

See the full listing for CCA on [page 27](#).

EXODUS TRANSITIONAL COMMUNITY—WELLNESS CENTER

An 822 OASAS–licensed outpatient program that provides mental health assessments and individual counseling. Services include substance use disorder treatment, harm reduction education, anger management, relapse prevention, community referrals, after-care, and more.

See the full listing for Exodus on [page 29](#).

EXPONENTS

Provides harm reduction services, treatment and recovery services, educational services, and professional development and training services for those impacted by HIV/AIDS, substance use disorder, incarceration, and behavioral health challenges.

See the full listing for Exponents on [page 30](#).

REALIZATION CENTER

<https://realizationcenternyc.com>

175 Remsen Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.342.6700

19 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003
Telephone: 212.627.9600

An outpatient treatment center. Specialized areas of service include substance use disorder, dual diagnosis, chronic relapse, binge eating disorder, hypersexual disorder, gambling disorder, DWI/DUI issues, parenting skills, codependency, depression and anxiety, healthcare services for LGBTQI+ people, and anger management. Operates a treatment program specifically for formerly incarcerated people. Offers sliding scale fees and most major insurance plans are accepted, including Medicaid. Telehealth services are available.

REVCORE RECOVERY CENTER

Telephone: 212.966.9537

<https://revcorerecovery.com>

15 2nd Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215

394 Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10013

37-20 74th Street, 3rd Floor, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

A network of NYS licensed outpatient facilities providing treatment and support services for individuals with substance use disorders and/or mental illness. Offers recovery coaching, job assistance, physical health connections, help applying for jobs and housing, and other case management functions. Open 7 days a week and offers evening programming. No wait for admissions appointments. Accepts Medicaid and offers sliding scale fees. Telehealth services available. Also provides in-the-field community-based services in Harlem and several shelters around the city.

ALBERT EINSTEIN COLLEGE OF MEDICINE—MONTEFIORE-EINSTEIN DIVISION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

www.einsteinmed.edu/departments/psychiatry-behavioral-sciences/division-of-substance-abuse

Montefiore Wellness Center at Melrose
260 East 161st Street, Bronx, NY 10451

Montefiore Wellness Center at Port Morris
804 East 138th Street, Bronx, NY 10454

Montefiore Wellness Center at Waters Place
1510 Waters Place, Bronx, NY 10461

Offers outpatient substance use and medication assisted treatment. Other services include group and individual counseling, primary care, and medically supervised withdrawal services. Medicaid accepted and fees are on a sliding scale. Visit the website for contact information for a specific program.

ARGUS COMMUNITY 

760 East 160th Street, Bronx, NY 10456
Telephone: 718.401.5700 / Intake: 718.401.5726
www.arguscommunity.org

Provides treatment and prevention programs including care management and coordination, intensive residential treatment, outpatient services, career training, client money-management services, a reentry initiative, an HSE program, and youth intervention and development. Contact for more information about programs, residential treatment locations, intake requirements, and walk-in hours.

ARMS ACRES—OUTPATIENT SERVICES 

www.armsacres.com

3584 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, NY 10467
Telephone: 718.653.1537

90-02 161st Street, Jamaica, NY 11432
Telephone: 718.520.1513



Outpatient clinics for those in need of alcohol or substance use disorder counseling. A broad range of services and programs are offered, which vary depending on location. No referral needed and most insurance accepted. Call for information about programs and requirements.

THE BOWERY MISSION 

Offers short- and long-term residential programs for alcohol or substance use disorder treatment for men. Attendance at Christian religious services is compulsory when operating, as is work detail in maintaining the residence. Participants must arrive through Emergency Shelter and make an appointment with a social worker. Intake requirements: 90 days abstinent from alcohol and drugs, referrals from the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), and

willing to take a tuberculosis test. First time guests automatically get a bed for seven days.

See the full listing for The Bowery Mission on [page 89](#).

CREATE, INC.  

73 Lenox Avenue, New York, NY 10026

Telephone: 212.663.1975 / Clinic: 212.663.1596

www.createinc.org

An outpatient and inpatient substance use disorder clinic providing treatment and recovery services. Offers specialized services for those who have co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorder, transitional living for homeless young adults, vocational counseling, job preparation and placement, day services for older people, and food distribution every Wednesday 10am–12pm.

ELMCOR YOUTH AND ADULT ACTIVITIES, INC. 

107-20 Northern Blvd., Corona, NY 11368

Telephone: 718.651.0096

www.elmcor.org

Provides outpatient and residential services. The outpatient program is a medically supervised Article 32 program offering services to individuals ages 15 and over struggling with co-occurring and substance use disorders. The intensive residential program provides services for people ages 18 and over with chronic substance use disorders. Services include individual and group counseling, vocational training, health education, relapse prevention, referrals, mental health evaluations, and psychopharmacology. Letters of reasonable assurance can be provided to assist with supportive services once a client is released.

GREENWICH HOUSE—CENTER FOR HEALING

190 Mercer Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10012

Intake: 212.677.3400

www.greenwichhouse.org

An outpatient treatment program. Services include methadone maintenance, buprenorphine treatment, naloxone training and distribution, medical care, addiction and mental health counseling, group counseling, psychiatric services, HIV counseling and testing, hepatitis C treatment, job training and placement assistance, educational assistance, and follow-up and aftercare planning.

HARLEM EAST LIFE PLAN (HELP)

2369 2nd Avenue, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 212.876.2300

www.harlemeastlifeplan.com

A multi-faceted outpatient facility offering co-located services of addiction medicine, general medicine, and mental health. Services include medication assistance to individuals who are in need of opioid and other substance use disorder treatment, individual and group counseling, primary care, a mental health counseling center, ambulatory detoxification treatment for all substances, anger management, and domestic violence group service. Accepts Medicaid, Medicare, and most insurances. Offers sliding scale fees. Walk-ins are accepted. Contact for more information on services and hours.

LOWER EASTSIDE SERVICE CENTER (LESC)

80 Maiden Lane, Suite 305, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.566.5372

www.lesc.org

Provides a range of opioid treatment and other substance use disorders care for New Yorkers ages 18 and over. Inpatient and outpatient services are available at various locations throughout NYC. Treatment services include individual therapy, vocational services, medical care, case management, and legal help. Mental health services, supportive housing programs, and primary health-

care services are also offered. Call for locations and admission instructions.

ODYSSEY HOUSE

219 East 121st Street, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 212.987.5100 / Helpline: 866.888.7880

<https://odysseyhousenyc.org>

Offers residential and outpatient treatment programs to New Yorkers living with a substance use disorder. The residential program is a drug-free community for people ages 18 and over. Outpatient services are available for people ages 12–17. Programs typically include a combination of counseling and medication along with access to support services including housing, education, and job training. Contact for more information on requirements.

PHOENIX HOUSE

Admission Inquiries: 844.815.1508

<https://phoenixhouseny.org>

A substance use disorder treatment provider for adults ages 18 and over. Offers short- and long-term residential, intensive outpatient, and general outpatient treatment. Centers are located in Brooklyn, Queens, and Long Island. Call for hours and services at each location.

QUEENS VILLAGE COMMITTEE FOR MENTAL HEALTH FOR J-CAP, INC.

116-30 Sutphin Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11434

Telephone: 718.322.2500 / Appointments: 718.734.2539

<https://acacianetwork.org/j-cap>

Offers a drug-free residential treatment program for men ages 18 and over. Educational and vocational services are provided. Walk-ins welcome, but appointments by phone or referral preferred.



<https://samaritanvillage.org>

Administrative Headquarters

138-02 Queens Blvd., Briarwood, NY 11435

Telephone: 718.206.2000

Central Admissions

The Richard Pruss Wellness Center

362 East 148th Street, Bronx, NY 10455

Telephone: 855.322.4357 or 718.657.6195

Offers intensive residential and outpatient programs in locations throughout NYC, as well as ambulatory methadone-to-abstinence programs and an aftercare program in Queens. Other services include medical care and health education, HIV testing, counseling, support groups, and treatment programs for youth and veterans. Also has two Peer Assisted Recovery Center (PARC) locations, where individuals in all stages of recovery can socialize and receive a range of support services. Contact for more information on services and locations.

START TREATMENT & RECOVERY CENTERS

Headquarters: 937 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11238

New Appointments: 800.211.0996

www.startny.org

A medically supervised outpatient treatment program offering comprehensive drug-free treatment. Services include mental health assessment and psychiatric referrals, relapse prevention, polydrug group, vocational and educational workshops, HIV testing and counseling, and individual and group counseling. Locations across Manhattan and Brooklyn. Contact for program information and requirements.

VIP COMMUNITY SERVICES

770 East 176th Street, Bronx, NY 10460

Telephone: 718.583.5150

www.vipservices.org

Provides recovery and wellness services to people with histories of substance use disorder including outpatient and residential treatment, primary and specialty care, mental health services, care coordination, HIV/AIDS prevention, education and treatment, and supportive and permanent housing. Contact for hours and admission information.

Support Groups

AL-ANON—NYC

4 West 43rd Street, Suite 308, New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212.941.0094

www.nycalanon.org

Holds support meetings for the relatives and friends of a person with alcohol use disorder. Call or visit the website to find meeting information.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (AA)—NEW YORK



307 7th Avenue, Suite 303, New York, NY 10001

Hotline: 212.647.1680

NY Intergroup Bridging the Gap: 201.503.4008

www.nyintergroup.org

A support group for those recovering from alcohol use disorder open to all ages. Meetings are held throughout NYC. Contact for meeting and outreach information. The hotline is available 9am–2am. People incarcerated on Rikers Island can call the Bridging the Gap line to find a meeting to attend after release.

GAM-ANON FOR NEW YORK

PO Box 307, Massapequa Park, NY 11762

Hotline: 718.352.1671

www.gam-anon.org

A support group for individuals whose lives have been affected by someone with a gambling problem. Visit the website for more information and details to join a meeting.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (NA)—GREATER NEW YORK REGION

154 Christopher Street, Suite 1A, New York, NY 10014

Telephone: 212.929.7117 / Helpline: 212.929.6262

<https://newyorkna.org>

A support group for those recovering from substance use disorder. Call or visit the website for meeting information.

NEW YORK CRYSTAL METH ANONYMOUS INTERGROUP

Helpline: 855.638.4373

www.nycma.org

A support group for those recovering from crystal meth use. Call or visit the website for meeting information.

PILLS ANONYMOUS

www.pillsanonymous.org

A support group for those recovering from pill use. Visit the website for meeting information.

SEXUAL COMPULSIVES ANONYMOUS OF NEW YORK

**Mailing Address: 511 6th Avenue, Suite #322, New York, NY
10011**

Telephone: 917.722.6912

www.scany.org

A 12-step fellowship and recovery program, inclusive of all sexual orientations, open to anyone with a desire to recover from sexual compulsion, porn addiction, or romantic obsession. Literature resources are available in Spanish. There are no requirements for admission to the meetings. Call or visit the website for meeting information and locations.

Resources & Other Services

NYS SMOKERS' QUITLINE

Telephone: 866.697.8487

<https://nysmokefree.com>

Provides information and tips on how to quit smoking, access to a Quit Coach, and other materials upon request. Will check with insurance for coverage of nicotine replacement therapy. Call Mon–Thu 9–9, Fri–Sun 9–5.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE (DOH)—NYC QUILTS

[www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/smoking-nyc-quits.
page](http://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/smoking-nyc-quits.page)

Provides a wide range of information on how to quit smoking and vaping.

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Telephone: 800.242.8721

www.heart.org

Provides information on the risks of smoking and vaping, and resources on how to quit.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SHOPLIFTING PREVENTION

33 Walt Whitman Road, Suite 233W, Huntington Station, NY 11746

Telephone: 631.923.2737 or 800.848.9595

www.shopliftingprevention.org

Provides information to help with avoiding shoplifting. If court-ordered, the Shoplifters Alternative Course (SA Course) is available online in English and Spanish.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)

Helpline: 800.662.4357

www.samhsa.gov

Provides nationwide treatment options, support group information, and a referral service. Visit the website for alcohol and drug information. Assistance available in multiple languages.


Helplines

NYS HOPELINE 

HOPEline: 877.846.7369

<https://oasas.ny.gov/hopeline>

Offers help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for alcohol use disorder, substance use disorder, and problem gambling. All calls are toll-free, anonymous, and confidential.

NYC 988 

Telephone: 988

<https://nyc988.cityofnewyork.us>

Provides connection to free, confidential mental health support. Call to speak to a counselor to get access to mental health and substance use services, in over 200 languages, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Be aware that according to policy, when a counselor feels a caller might be at “imminent risk” of harming themselves, emergency services, which may be the police, will be called, and can result in involuntary psychiatric detention.

Harm Reduction

There is no universally accepted definition of harm reduction. According to The National Harm Reduction Coalition, “Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs.”

Harm reduction encompasses a range of practices including, but not limited to, drug consumption rooms, needle and syringe services, non-abstinence-based housing and employment initiatives, drug checking, overdose prevention and reversal, and information on safer drug use.

Visit the **National Harm Reduction Coalition** website at <https://harmreduction.org> for resources to learn more including Harm Reduction 101.

Visit the **North American Syringe Exchange Network (NASEN)** website at <https://nasen.org> for an online directory of syringe services programs (SSPs) searchable by zip code and/or service provided.

For syringe services programs (SSPs) in NYC call **311** or visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/alcohol-and-drug-use-services.page.

Naloxone is a medication that reverses overdoses from opioids such as heroin, fentanyl, and prescription painkillers. For more information, including where to get a **free naloxone kit**, visit <https://nyc988.cityofnewyork.us/en/naloxone>.

Fentanyl use

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is at least 50 times as potent as heroin and is responsible for more overdoses than any other opioid.

You cannot overdose simply by touching fentanyl. You can't get secondhand exposure from touching someone who used fentanyl.

It must be introduced into the bloodstream or a mucus membrane in order for someone to feel the effects. While there are fentanyl patches that can be placed on the skin for pain management, this is not the formulation being cut into other substances.

Visit <https://harmreduction.org/issues/fentanyl> for information on fentanyl use, myths and facts, and overdose prevention tips.

Xylazine information

Xylazine, also known as “tranq,” is marketed as a veterinary tranquilizer that produces sedative-like effects. It is becoming more frequently found in the drug supply and has been known to cause serious skin ulcers and wounds that, if left untreated, can lead to amputation.

Xylazine is not an opioid, so it doesn't respond to naloxone. However, as xylazine is often mixed in with fentanyl, naloxone should always be administered when responding to any suspected overdose. Because xylazine is a sedative, rescue breathing is an effective overdose response strategy and should be performed until Emergency Medical Services (EMS) arrive. For more information, including on suspected overdoses, wound care, and harm reduction, visit <https://oasas.ny.gov/xylazine>.

NYC Health Department's drug-checking program

In 2024, a health advisory was issued as Carfentanil and Medetomidine was found in NYC's drug supply, available online at www.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/han/advisory/2024/han-advisory-20.pdf.

Carfentanil information

Carfentanil, a synthetic opioid, can be up to 100 times more potent than fentanyl. According to the health advisory, “Like other opioids, the effects of carfentanil can be reversed with the administration of naloxone. Although multiple doses of naloxone may be needed, the NYC Health Department discourages the use of 8mg naloxone among lay-persons and first-responders, as it has not been found to be more effective than 4mg naloxone and can increase the risk of precipitated opioid withdrawal.”

Medetomidine information

Medetomidine is a non-opioid anesthetic that is similar to xylazine, but is more potent and causes longer-lasting effects. Like xylazine, it doesn’t respond to naloxone. However, as it is most often found with fentanyl and other potent opioids, naloxone should always be administered when responding to any suspected overdose along with rescue breathing.

Wound Care

Wound Care & Medical Triage for People Who Use Drugs and the Programs That Serve Them is a comprehensive guide with information and recommendations regarding general health, safer use practices, common viral, fungal, parasitic, and other injection-related infections, overdose and overamp, tapering, withdrawal, medications for opioid use disorder, and seeking medical care. Available online at <https://nastad.org/resources/wound-care-medical-triage-people-who-use-drugs-and-programs-serve-them>.

Drug testing kits

Testing unregulated drugs with a test kit allows people to implement appropriate harm reduction strategies to reduce the risk of an overdose. They can be used to test injectable drugs, powders, and pills.

Free fentanyl and xylazine test strips are available to all New Yorkers and orders can be placed online at <https://oasas.ny.gov/harm-reduction-delivered>. People can also find test strips at their local overdose prevention program or harm reduction organization, searchable by zip code online at <https://providerdirectory.aidsinstituteny.org>.

New York State’s Drug Checking Service offers people who use

drugs timely and detailed information on the contents of their drugs, helping them to make more informed decisions. For a list of locations visit www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/consumers/prevention/oduh/drug_checking.htm.

DoseTest sells fentanyl test strips starting at \$1 each and xylazine test strips starting at \$1.75 each. The website provides information on how to use the test strips for both solid and liquid samples available at <https://dostest.com>.

Basic Overdose Prevention Tips

Anyone can overdose, especially when using drugs for the first time or using after a period of not using. People who have overdosed previously are much more likely to overdose again. Overdose risk increases for those who use drugs alone. It is recommended that people who use alone let a contact know where they are and that they are using. That contact can check on a person by phone/text and notify emergency services if they don't respond.

- Fentanyl can be present in any drug and drastically increases one's risk of overdose, and the strength of a particular drug can be different every single time.
- Mixing drugs can increase the risk for overdose, particularly when using benzodiazepines, alcohol, and/or opioids together.
- Have a safety plan written down that can be referred to before/during use. This can be helpful and decrease the chances of a fatal overdose. The **NYS Department of Health** has a resource called *Build a Safety Plan*, available in English and Spanish, at <https://oasas.ny.gov/prevent-overdose>.
- The **Never Use Alone** hotline at **877.696.1996** is a number that anyone can call when they are about to use a substance. An operator will stay on the line with the person while they use. If the person does not respond after a set amount of time after use, the operator will notify emergency services of the person's location for response.

Overdose Prevention Centers in NYC

Overdose Prevention Centers, also called supervised injection sites, are healthcare facilities that provide a safe environment where people can use previously obtained drugs under supervision. Trained staff at the centers observe and intervene if someone shows signs of an overdose.

People who use drugs can:

- Get sterile supplies to consume drugs
- Test their drugs for fentanyl
- Speak to harm reduction specialists about safer use
- Get connected to treatment and other healthcare and social services

For more information visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/alcohol-and-drug-use-services.page.

ONPOINT NYC

Telephone: 212.828.8464

<https://onpointnyc.org>

East Harlem

104-106 East 126th Street, New York, NY 10035

Drop-in hours: Mon–Fri 7:30am–11pm, Sat and Sun 10:30am–6pm

Washington Heights

500 West 180th Street, New York, NY 10033

Drop-in hours: Mon–Fri 7:30am–11pm, Sat and Sun 9am–4:30pm

The two Overdose Prevention Centers in NYC. Offers a harm-reduction program for injection drug users, providing needle exchange as well as a variety of support services including counseling, legal assistance, case management and referrals to HIV testing, treatment, medical care, and food pantries. The website also provides educational resources for safer drug use. Location accessible to people with disabilities. Contact for the most up-to-date drop-in hours.

VOCAL-NY

300 Douglass Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Telephone: 718.802.9540

<https://vocal-ny.org>

A drop-in center for people who use drugs offering an array of harm

reduction services including syringe exchange, harm reduction supplies, and connection with MAT (i.e. methadone, buprenorphine); dignity services such as laundry, shower, and clothing closet; as well as a variety of support services including counseling, legal assistance, case management, and medical care coordination. Location accessible to people with disabilities. Contact for the most up-to-date drop-in hours.

AFTER HOURS PROJECT

<https://afterhoursproject.org>

Main Office: 1204 Broadway, Brooklyn, New York 11221

Telephone: 718.249.0755

Wellness Center: 935 Broadway, Brooklyn, New York 11221

Housing: 16 Dodworth Street, Brooklyn, New York 11221

Telephone: 347.663.2762

A community-based harm reduction program. Provides syringe services, hygiene kits, harm reduction counseling for people who use drugs, housing, case management, medical transportation, treatment readiness, rapid testing for HIV/AIDS, HIV counseling and education, hepatitis A and B vaccinations, HCV screening and education, condom distribution, community outreach, referrals, short-term transitional housing, and short-term rental assistance. Visit the website for information on mobile outreach.

ST. ANN'S CORNER OF HARM REDUCTION

886 Westchester Avenue, Bronx, NY 10459

Telephone: 718.585.5544

www.sachr.org

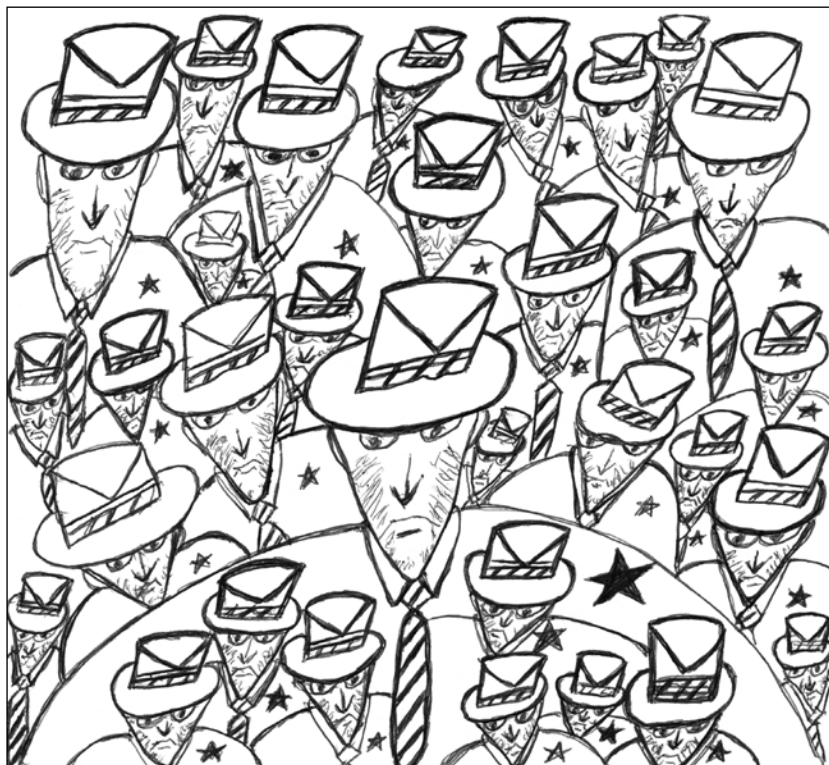
Provides drug users with harm reduction services including syringe exchange, drug testing kits, social work, showers, holistic health services, HIV/HCV testing, support groups, and educational programs. Also provides care coordination, accompaniments to appointments, MetroCards, direct observation therapy (DOT)

for medication, and advocacy to people living with HIV. Visit the website for an updated outreach schedule.

Legal

PROTEST BEYOND THE LAW IS NOT A DEPARTURE FROM
DEMOCRACY; IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL TO IT.

— HOWARD ZINN



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY E. RODRIGUEZ

For detailed information on how to clean up one’s rap sheet, restore one’s rights, and avoid discrimination while looking for work, see *The Job Search* chapter, starting on [page 364](#).

Police Interactions: Know Your Rights

The following includes information from the **ACLU** that can be found at www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/stopped-by-police.

A note from ACLU: Interactions with police are stressful experiences that can go bad quickly. The following information describes what the law requires and also offers strategies for handling police encounters. The burden of de-escalation does not fall on private citizens—it falls on police officers. However, you cannot assume officers will behave in a way that protects your safety or that they will uphold your rights even after you assert them. You may be able to reduce risk to yourself by staying calm and not exhibiting hostility toward the officers. The truth is that there are situations where people have done everything they could to de-escalate a police encounter, yet still were injured or killed.

For information on alternatives to calling the police for someone who is experiencing a crisis, see [page 159](#). Be aware that for this service a trained counselor will help to assess the most appropriate next steps, which may include calling 911 and involving the police.

Your rights

- You have the right to remain silent. To exercise that right, say so out loud.
- You have the right to refuse to consent to a search of yourself, your car, your home, or your electronic devices. To exercise that right, say so out loud.
- If you are not under arrest, you have the right to walk away.
- You have the right to a lawyer if you are arrested. Ask for one immediately.

How to reduce risk to yourself

- Try to stay calm.
- Do not run, resist, or obstruct the officers.
- Keep your hands where the police can see them.
- Do not lie or give false documents.

If you are stopped for questioning

- Ask, “Am I free to leave?” If the officer says yes, calmly and silently walk away. If you are being detained or under arrest, you have a right to know why.
- If police say you are not free to leave, then you are being detained, but not necessarily arrested. You may be asked for identification and although you are not legally required to carry an ID in New York City, in many cases it’s safer to show an ID.
- You have the right to remain silent and cannot be punished for refusing to answer questions. If you wish to remain silent, say aloud, “I am choosing to remain silent.”
- Everything you say or do can and will be used against you in a court of law. Remember that law enforcement is specially trained to use your words and actions to justify arrest, prosecution, and conviction.
- You do not have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings, but police may pat down your outermost clothing if they suspect you have a weapon. You should not physically resist, but you have the right to refuse consent for any further search. If you do consent, it can affect you later in court. Say out loud, “I do not consent to this search.”

If you are stopped in your car

- Both drivers and passengers have the right to remain silent. If you are a passenger, you can ask if you are free to leave. If yes, calmly leave if you choose.
- Stop the car in a safe place as quickly as possible. Turn off the car, turn on the internal light, open the window, and place your hands on the wheel. Avoid making sudden movements.
- Upon request, show police your driver’s license, registration, and proof of insurance.
- If an officer or immigration agent asks to look inside your car, you can refuse to consent to the search and should say so out loud. But if police believe your car contains evidence of a crime, your car can be searched without your consent.

If police officers come to your home

- You do not have to let them in unless they have certain kinds of warrants, signed by a judge.
- Ask the officer to slip the warrant under the door or hold it up to the window so you can inspect it. A search warrant allows police to enter the address listed on the warrant, but officers can only search the areas and for the items listed. An arrest warrant allows police to enter the home of the person listed on the warrant if they believe the person is inside.
- Even if officers have a warrant, you have the right to remain silent. If you choose to speak to the officers, step outside and close the door.

If you are arrested

- For your safety, do not resist arrest, even if you believe the arrest is unfair.
- Say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer immediately. Do not give any explanations or excuses. If you can't pay for a lawyer, you have the right to a free one. Do not say anything, sign anything, or make any decisions without a lawyer.
- If you have been arrested contact **Good Call** at **833.346.6322 (833.3.GOODCALL)** for free legal support.
- You have the right to make a local phone call. The police cannot listen or record your call if you call a lawyer.
- Prepare yourself and your family in case you are arrested. Memorize the phone numbers of your family and your lawyer. Make emergency plans if you have children or take medication.
- If bail is set and you can't afford it, ask your lawyer about contacting a bail fund.

DNA Collection

In New York, the police are required to get a warrant or court order before taking your DNA. Ways to protect against unwarranted DNA collection include:

- Stating aloud that you do not consent to the police taking your DNA swab without a warrant or court order.
- Avoiding drinking, smoking, or chewing gum in police custody, as used items have your DNA on them.
- Keeping your mask and other PPE as you go through the arrest process, as those items have your DNA on them.
- Parents with a child in custody can tell the police that they do

not consent to any collection of their child's DNA either through a swab or from something the child ate or drank.

If you feel your rights have been violated

- Remember, it can be dangerous to challenge police misconduct on the street. Do not physically resist officers or threaten to file a complaint.
- Write down everything you remember, including officers' badge and patrol car numbers, which agency the officers were from, and any other details. Get contact information for witnesses. If you are injured, seek medical attention and take photographs of your injuries.
- File a written complaint with the agency's internal affairs division and/or the civilian complaint board. In most cases, you can file a complaint anonymously if you wish. Visit www.nyc.gov/site/ccrb/index.page or call **800.341.2272** to file a complaint to the **NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board**.

What you can do if you witness police abuse or brutality

- You have a right to record or photograph police interactions, as long as you do not interfere with or obstruct their movements.
- Do not try to hide the fact that you are recording. When they are performing their jobs, police officers do not have the same privacy protections as civilians. However, recording or photographing civilians without their permission can put them at risk for additional surveillance or legal action.
- Police officers are not allowed to confiscate or demand to view your photographs or video without a warrant, and they may not delete your photographs or video under any circumstances. If an officer orders you to stop recording or orders you to hand over your phone, you should politely but firmly tell the officer that you do not consent to doing so, and remind the officer that taking photographs or video is your right under the First Amendment. Be aware that some officers may arrest you for refusing to comply. The arrest would be unlawful, but you will need to weigh the personal risks of arrest (including the risk that officers may search you and your phone upon arrest) against the value of continuing to record.
- Whether or not you are able to record everything, write down everything you remember, including officers' badge and patrol car numbers, which agency the officers were from, how many

officers were present and what their names were, any use of weapons (including less-lethal weapons such as Tasers or batons), and any injuries suffered by the person stopped. If you are able to speak to the person stopped by police after the police leave, they may find your contact information helpful in case they decide to file a complaint or pursue a lawsuit against the officers.

In Public Housing

- You have the same rights as anyone else on the street or in private housing.
- Police can approach you inside public housing if they think you are violating a NYCHA House Rule, such as hanging out in the lobby. They may ask for ID and ask questions about what you're doing and where you're going. But, unless they have "reasonable suspicion" that you have, are, or are about to commit a crime, you have the right to walk away and not answer their questions. You should handle this situation like any other police interaction.
- If police check to verify whether you are a resident or a resident's guest, they are detaining you in a "stop." They cannot do this unless they have reasonable suspicion that you are trespassing or committing another crime. If police believe you are trespassing in public housing, they may give you the opportunity to leave before arresting you. If police ask you to leave and you don't, they may arrest you.
- It is the NYPD's policy that they can arrest anyone, including residents, found on the roof, roof landing (top of the stairs), or other "restricted areas" regardless of what you are doing there.

Arrests & Policing

The Legal Aid Society has information resources on their website available at <https://legalaidnyc.org/get-help/arrests-policing>.

Topics covered include what people need to know about encounters with police, getting help after arrest, criminal court, arrest and prosecution of minors, prison visitation, finding a lawyer, Miranda rights, and what to expect if you're being arrested. They also provide a glossary of legal terms and acronyms available at <https://legalaidnyc.org/glossary>.

Law Enforcement Lookup (LELU)

Part of the Legal Aid Society's Cop Accountability Project (CAP), LELU is an online database that allows people to access law enforcement misconduct data in NYC, available at <https://legalaidnyc.org/law-enforcement-look-up>.

Protest Safety & Rights

It's important to understand the risks of attending a protest, including the risk of arrest and detention, which have different implications for different people, including legal complications and safety risks for people with previous criminal legal system involvement, undocumented immigrants, people with disabilities, transgender and gender nonconforming people, and others.

The following information is compiled from the **ACLU**, **NYCLU**, and the **Legal Aid Society**. For more information on rights to protest visit <https://legalaidnyc.org/get-help/arrests-policing/what-you-need-to-know-about-protesting>.

You Have the Right to Protest

- New Yorkers have the constitutional right to engage in protest activity on public sidewalks and streets, and in public parks. This includes the right to distribute flyers or leaflets; the right to hold press conferences, demonstrations, and rallies; and the right to march on public sidewalks and in public streets. The City can impose restrictions, and in some instances requires a permit.
- The police may issue a dispersal order. If they do, they are obliged to provide clear notice and an opportunity for you to leave the area.

General Information if You Are Arrested

- If you are detained, questioned, or arrested, it is your right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you or others.
- If you are arrested, it is your right to ask for a lawyer immediately. The **National Lawyers Guild** specializes in representing people arrested during protests. The phone number of the **NYC Chapter** of the **National Lawyers Guild** is: **212.679.6018**.

Protections Against Surveillance at Protests

- The police can view photos and video to see who attended a protest, and they can use face recognition tools to match one's identity to existing records. Protesters can wear a face mask, hat, and sunglasses to limit their exposure.
- Leave your car at home. Police can use automated license plate readers to track protestors. If you can, ride a bicycle or walk to prevent your license plate being tracked.
- Wear nondescript, solid colors, and cover identifying features such as tattoos.

Protect Your Digital Security

Every electronic device that you have with you has the potential to be taken by law enforcement if you are arrested. More information on how law enforcement agencies extract data from cellphones, including location data, is on [page 196](#).

You have the right to refuse a search of your devices and you are not required to unlock your device for police. To ensure your refusal is known, you can state it out loud if asked. If your phone is confiscated, attempting to remotely wipe your device can result in criminal charges against you.

Ways to protect digital security include:

- Disabling face/fingerprint unlock on your phone and using strong passcodes of 10 characters or more.
- Turning off GPS, Bluetooth, WiFi, and all location services on your phone and on individual apps.
- Reviewing your social media privacy settings to limit who can see your posts and accounts.
- Do not tag or post identifiable images of people without their permission. Doing so puts people at risk for additional surveillance.
- Encrypted messaging and calling apps are used to send and receive texts and calls privately. Encrypted apps, such as the free app Signal, often have a disappearing messages feature for added security, where texts are automatically deleted after a set period of time and cannot be recovered.
- Put your phone on airplane mode. Enabling airplane mode when you are not communicating reduces the amount of radio signals

your device transmits while you are protesting and limits your location from being tracked.

For more information about digital surveillance and protesting, visit the guide by the **Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)** at <https://ssd.eff.org/en/module/attending-protest>.

Defend Our Movements is a web-based clearinghouse with useful information about protecting your devices and data. Visit <https://defendourmovements.org/resource/digital-self-defense-curriculum> for the digital self-defense curriculum.

Digital Policing & Surveillance

New technology has given law enforcement agencies (such as the NYPD, ICE, and the FBI) more tools to use when policing. Digital information is being collected and stored, and law enforcement agencies use this information to watch, investigate, and arrest people. Laws have struggled to keep up when it comes to people's digital privacy rights, meaning that digital surveillance is currently used without many regulations.

Advanced technology used by federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies includes predictive policing, automated risk-assessment systems, face and speaker recognition, and other digital surveillance tools. These tools use algorithms and machine learning, and it is not always publicly known how, where, or when they are being used.

Collected digital information is used to create files on specific people, or to create databases of groups of people. Law enforcement databases can be over-inclusive and racially discriminatory because the data collected reflects existing biases in policing. The gang database created and used by the NYPD does not require any evidence of criminality or suspicion of wrongdoing in order for a person to be added. People are not notified when they are included in the database, and minors may be added to the NYPD gang database without parental notification. There is no official way to challenge inclusion and no criteria or protocol for removal from the gang database.

The NYPD has stated that there are two ways in which a person can be added to the database. One way is if a person admits to police that they are a gang member, if they make an admission on social media, or if they are identified as a gang member by two people who the police consider reliable sources. The second way is if a person meets two or more of the following criteria: being in a location associated with a gang, wearing colors associated with a gang, using hand signs associated with a gang, having tattoos associated with a gang, and association with gang members in person or online, such as connections on social media (“liking,” being tagged in pictures, or commenting on posts).

Visit the **Legal Aid Society’s** webpage at <https://legallaidfoil.backspace.com> for more information on the gang database, including information on submitting a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request about being in the gang database.

Phone Surveillance in NYC and NYS Facilities

Securus Technologies, LLC (also known as JPay) is a prison technologies firm that sells telephone services to New York State Department of Correction and Community Supervision (DOCCS) and New York City Department of Correction (DOC) facilities.

Phone calls and conversations made by people who are currently incarcerated in New York are recorded, logged, and analyzed. Speaker recognition technology is used to identify people by their voice. Those who are currently incarcerated are required to record their voice in order to gain access to use the phone system. With each person’s voice on file, the technology can identify who is speaking within the first few seconds of each phone call. The people who they speak to on the phone (friends, families, advisers, minor children, etc.) can be identified by their voices and included in a database that can compare voices and identify potential matches. A loved one who accepts a call from a facility may not be able to be identified by name, but the system can record information such as their phone number, their location (for up to one hour after a call ends), how often they call, who they are in conversation with, and what they say. Additionally, the voices of previously incarcerated people will remain in the database and those people would be identifiable by name if they accepted a call from a facility.

Background conversations of people not on the call can also be picked up and recorded.

In addition to identifying who is speaking on a phone call, JPay is also able to conduct real-time, undetectable monitoring by live investigators. The investigators are automatically alerted when a “flagged” person places a phone call, and they are immediately connected to that call. Further, their technology can identify “suspicious” key words or phrases and suspected criminal activity. JPay’s methods of defining suspicious key words, or what constitutes suspected criminal activity, are proprietary and therefore not public knowledge.

Some phone calls are considered private, such as those subject to attorney-client privilege, and certain phone numbers can be registered as “private,” automatically eliminating them from monitoring or recording, and listing them as “private” in call logs. However, JPay does not publicly share information about how it remains accountable for following protocols around private phone calls.

Further privacy issues arise regarding data storage and retention. Users with access to the database, such as local police departments or district attorney’s offices, can retain recordings indefinitely, with the ability to copy recorded conversations onto any external device.

It is important to be aware of these privacy risks and to use the phone system in any facility with caution.

For more information visit the **Surveillance Technology Oversight Project (STOP)**’s website at www.stopspying.org/listening-beyond-the-bars.

NYC DOC Family Video Visiting

Visit www.nyc.gov/site/doc/inmate-info/Revised_Visit_Schedule.page for the most up-to-date information on Televisits. Televisits can be done using any electronic device with a camera, an internet connection, and an active email account. Televisits impact visitor privacy and **all family visits are recorded**. The new protocol to record all family visits does not align with previously established minimum standards of visitor privacy. Incarcerated people and their families should be aware of the privacy implications.

According to NYC Board of Corrections Minimum Standards (policies that define the rights of incarcerated people and their families in NYC), family visits should be considered private. The standards that govern surveillance of family visiting are outlined in the The Rules of the City of New York, Title 40, section § 1-09 (g), and read as follows:

(5) Supervision shall be provided during visits solely to ensure that the safety or security of the facility is maintained.

(6) Visits shall not be listened to or monitored unless a lawful warrant is obtained, although visual supervision should be maintained.

The full text of the NYC Board of Corrections Minimum Standards can be found at <https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/newyorkcity/latest/overview>.

While phone calls are regularly recorded, loved ones do not need to pre-register personal information in order to receive a phone call from a DOC facility. (It is still important to be aware that one's voice is recorded, along with the content of their conversation, and the phone number and location being called.) In contrast, televisits require a visitor's name, address, date of birth, phone number, email address, and a scan or photo of a valid government-issued ID. With a televisit, personal identifiable information about each visitor is recorded and kept indefinitely, along with video and audio of each visit that is retained for 90 days. The DOC states that, "Any statements made during your visit can be shared with law enforcement." If a DOC Investigator or legal subpoena from another law enforcement agency requests a copy of a televisit video within 90 days, DOC will share a copy with the requesting unit.

The DOC's Visitor Televisit information page can be found at www.nyc.gov/site/doc/inmate-info/televisits.page.

Be aware of what you post on social media

Law enforcement agencies use social media in many ways including browsing social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.), creating fake profiles and pages (to gain access to both public and non-public information), and monitoring and tracking search words and hashtags (#s) people use on social media websites. Law enforcement agencies also monitor friend connections, people you follow,

people who follow you, group page affiliations, and “likes.” Be aware that there are ways for law enforcement agencies to access more information (such as location data) on things you post, such as videos or images.

It is important to remember that anything you post publicly, either on a public page or in public groups, can be legally used against you or another person. No subpoena is required for accessing public data like this. Even if you use privacy settings, everything you post online is in some way accessible to everyone. While you may be able to delete a post or your profile later, during the time between making the post and deleting it, law enforcement may have already preserved a copy or someone may have saved it or posted it somewhere where you do not have the ability to delete it. Do not post something online if you do not want everyone (including law enforcement agencies) to see it.

Cell phones

To search phones, law enforcement agencies use mobile device forensic tools (MDFTs), a powerful technology that allows police to extract a full copy of data from a cell phone. All emails, texts, photos, location, app data, and more can be evaluated. If the police take your phone, you may not get it back easily. Back up your data regularly and store that backup in a safe place.

For more information **UpTurn** has published a comprehensive report called *Mass Extraction: The Widespread Power of U.S. Law Enforcement to Search Mobile Phones*, available online at www.upturn.org/reports/2020/mass-extraction.

Location data and how police use it

Law enforcement agencies use location data from cell phones to find and track people. Your cell phone itself, and nearly every individual app on your phone, can track your location. Turning off or disallowing the location tracking in the settings of your phone will limit the ability for your phone to be tracked.

When you have location enabled for an app, that information is stored and law enforcement agencies can issue a warrant to see your cell phone’s location. For example, Google keeps location information and the history is detailed enough to describe the street-by-street movements of a person. You can go through the

settings on your cell phone and check to see if location services are enabled for the apps on your phone.

Resources

The **Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)** works to protect online privacy. EFF's project **Surveillance Self-Defense** is a website that offers tips, tools, and how-tos for safer online communication, that can be accessed at <https://ssd.eff.org/en>. The website provides basic information on how online surveillance works and instructions on installing secure applications that can help protect your privacy. The Further Learning section has tips on how to reduce the risk to yourself in different scenarios, such as being in Facebook Groups, protecting yourself on social networks, things to consider when crossing the border, and more. The **Street-Level Surveillance** project provides information on surveillance technologies that law enforcement agencies routinely deploy in communities, available online at <https://sls.eff.org>. The resources are designed for advocacy organizations, journalists, defense attorneys, policymakers, and members of the public. The **Atlas of Surveillance**, available at <https://atlasofsurveillance.org>, is a database of surveillance technologies deployed by law enforcement in communities across the US searchable by state, city, technology, and more. This includes drones, body-worn cameras, automated license plate readers, facial recognition, and more.

Unfriend the NYPD, available online at <https://welcometocup.org/projects/unfriend-the-nypd>, is a project created by the **Surveillance Technology Oversight Project (S.T.O.P.)**, the **Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)**, and the **Youth Design Center (YDC)**. The booklet is for youth and young adults and explains how the police can surveil phones through messenger apps, social media, and geofences, and offers protection tips. It also explains the concept of a risk profile, or how likely a person is to be surveilled by police. There is also a video series.

Defend Our Movements is a web-based clearinghouse with useful information about protecting your devices and data. Visit <https://defendourmovements.org/resource/digital-self-defense-curriculum> for the digital self-defense curriculum.

Tactical Tech's Data Detox Kit, available at www.tacticaltech.org/

[projects/data-detox-kit](#), is a toolkit that walks you through multiple subjects including an alternative app center, privacy tips for pro-tests, online privacy and smartphone data, and more.

The **Surveillance Technology Oversight Project (STOP)** litigates and advocates for privacy, fighting discriminatory and excessive local and state-level surveillance. Research and more information can be found at www.stopspying.org including how to request Know Your Rights training and workshops.

The **Brennan Center for Justice** has a resource called *New York City Police Department Surveillance Technology*, which provides an overview of the NYPD's surveillance technology, based on publicly available information, as well as the potential impact of the use of these tools, in chart form available online at www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/new-york-city-police-department-surveillance-technology.

Encrypted messaging and calling apps are used to send and receive texts and calls privately. Encrypted apps, such as the free app Signal, often have a disappearing messages feature for added security, where texts are automatically deleted after a set period of time and cannot be recovered. More information on **Signal** is available at www.signal.org. Another way to ensure that law enforcement agencies cannot access the data on your phone is to use strong passwords for the phone itself and for individual apps.

Representation & Assistance



Discovery Law

Created in 2020, New York State instituted a discovery law with a statute that requires evidence sharing between the prosecution and defense on an accelerated timeline—emphasizing the right of someone to fully understand their charges and the evidence against them before making a decision about accepting a plea bargain. It has since been modified many times.

For more information visit www.innovatingjustice.org/publications/discovery-NYS.

THE BRONX DEFENDERS  

360 East 161st Street, Bronx, NY 10451

Telephone: 718.838.7878 / Emergency Hotline: 347.778.1266

www.bronxdefenders.org

A public defender organization representing Bronx residents in criminal, family, housing, and immigration court, as well as public benefits matters. Provides reentry services and advocacy on behalf of individuals eligible for alternative-to-incarceration programs. Also offers a Healthy Parents, Healthy Babies Program. In case of a legal emergency in the Bronx involving the police or Administration for Children's Services (ACS), call the 24-hour emergency hotline.

BROOKLYN DEFENDER SERVICES (BDS)  

Main Office: 718.254.0700 / Criminal Defense: 718.254.0700

Family Defense: 347.592.2500 / Immigration: 718.564.6290

<https://bds.org>

Mailing Address: 177 Livingston Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Visitor Address (by appointment only): 156 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Provides free legal representation to people who cannot afford an attorney. Attorneys are assigned cases by the court system, but can provide referrals, legal education, and brief legal advice on a case-by-case basis. Attorneys specialize in criminal defense for people arrested in Brooklyn, family defense for parents or caretakers with an open ACS (child welfare) case or who are being investigated by ACS, and immigration cases for people at risk of deportation. Provides additional legal and social work services for clients, including civil legal advocacy, such as educational needs of clients or their children, housing and benefits advocacy, affirmative immigration applications, and reentry support.

Also hosts Reentry Speaks, a support group aimed at helping

Brooklynites with reentry back into the community post-incarceration. Participants can access resources and guidance. For more information people can call **646.856.8406** or **646.856.8428**.

The **Your Family, Your Rights** website is an advocacy and education website created for parents and caretakers impacted by the family policing system (commonly known as the child welfare system or ACS). Information on rights, resources, and legal help by borough is available at <https://yourfamilyyourrights.org>.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY (CSS)



Offers advice, brief service, and legal representation for individuals facing barriers to reentry in employment, licensing, housing, and civic engagement. Attorneys also represent individuals in motions to seal convictions. All services are free of charge.

See the full listing for Community Service Society on [page 117](#).

THE EXONERATION INITIATIVE (EXI)



233 Broadway, Suite 2370, New York, NY 10279

Telephone: 212.965.9335

www.exonerationinitiative.org

LEGAL

200 Provides free legal assistance to wrongfully convicted people in New York on cases that lack DNA evidence. Cases are reviewed with a focus on weak evidence that has recently proven unreliable such as mistaken eyewitnesses, false confessions, police misconduct, and perjury. Participants or their family members can write or call directly for case evaluation forms, or complete the forms online.

FEDERAL DEFENDERS OF NEW YORK



www.federaldefendersny.org

Eastern District

**300 Cadman Plaza West, One Pierrepoint Plaza, 16th Floor,
Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.330.1200**

**Southern District
52 Duane Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10007
Telephone: 212.417.8700**

Defends those accused of federal crimes who cannot afford representation. Clients are referred from the court. Also represents clients on appeals and continues to provide help with reentry programs for recently released people with substance use disorder and mental illness. The Eastern District serves Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island, with a separate office for Long Island. The Southern District serves Manhattan and the Bronx, with a White Plains office for counties north of NYC. Serves clients in three alternative-to-incarceration programs: the Pretrial Opportunity Court for drug users, the Special Options Services Court for non-violent juvenile defendants up to 24 years old, and the RISE (Reentry through Intensive Supervision and Employment) Court. Can be contacted through an individual's public defender.

GOOD CALL  

Telephone: 833.346.6322
<https://goodcall.org>

A hotline and emergency contact directory designed to assist people in NYC immediately after an arrest. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for free immediate legal support.

When someone is arrested, their phone is taken away, and they may not have memorized the phone numbers of all the people they want to reach. When someone calls the hotline, they are connected to a free lawyer. If the person arrested has saved their loved ones' contact information in Good Call's directory, their new lawyer can search the directory to get in touch with friends and family. Family members and friends can also add their own information to make sure they are alerted and connected with a lawyer in case their loved ones are arrested. The service is free and confidential.

INNOCENCE PROJECT

40 Worth Street, Suite 701, New York, NY 10013**Telephone: 212.364.5340**<https://innocenceproject.org>

Represents clients seeking post-conviction DNA testing to prove their innocence. Only considers cases 1) that are post-conviction, 2) that have physical evidence that, if subjected to DNA testing, will prove that the defendant is innocent, and 3) where the crime occurred in the United States, but not Arizona, California, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, or Puerto Rico. Contact by mail with a filled out intake form, which is available on the website. Does not accept telephone or email applications.

LAMBDA LEGAL

120 Wall Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10005**Telephone: 212.809.8585**<https://lambdalegal.org>

Provides help and advocacy for the LGBTQI+ community and those living with HIV who have faced discrimination of any kind. The website includes rights publications and other resources. The Help Desk provides information and resources regarding discrimination related to sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and HIV status. Please note that calls will not be initially answered by an attorney and that help desk analysts cannot give legal advice. Walk-ins not accepted.

LEGAL ACTION CENTER (LAC)

225 Varick Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10014**Telephone: 212.243.1313**www.lac.org

Provides free legal services for New Yorkers who face employment barriers or illegal discrimination based on their records of arrest or

conviction. Services include help getting free NYS rap sheets and correcting errors, applying for Certificates of Relief from Disabilities or Good Conduct, applying to seal old convictions, addressing job denials, gathering “evidence of rehabilitation,” and obtaining employment licenses. Additional free legal services available for people who use drugs, have substance use disorder (SUD), or are living with HIV or AIDS, including addressing illegal discrimination, access to mental health or SUD treatment, health privacy rights, and barriers to medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD). Prison and jail legal services limited to issues related to HIV/AIDS or access to MOUD. Free educational resources provided to all. Must call to set up an appointment. Incarcerated people may send mail.

LEGAL AID SOCIETY  

Headquarters: 199 Water Street, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.577.3300

Prisoners’ Rights Project: 212.577.3530 (Mon–Fri 9:30–4:30 for conditions in prison or jail)

<https://legalaidnyc.org>

Offers free legal counsel and advice to NYC residents who cannot afford a private lawyer. Contact the civil office in your local borough if you have legal questions about housing, benefits, disability, domestic violence, family issues, health, employment, immigration, HIV/AIDS, and elder law. Contact the criminal office in the borough where you were arrested if you need an attorney in a criminal trial, appeal, parole revocation, or prison condition concern. The Juvenile Rights Practice provides representation for children who appear before the family court in matters involving child protective proceedings, juvenile delinquency, people in need of supervision (PINS), and in appellate cases involving children. Provides free representation to low-income individuals.

The Parole Revocation Defense Unit can provide legal representation and social work diversion services to a person who is charged with violating the conditions of their release. An attorney will be appointed to the individual at their first hearing. If the individual is not eligible for a Legal Aid lawyer, they can write the supreme court of the county they are in to request court-appointed counsel. If an

individual has a parole problem anywhere outside the five boroughs of NYC, they must write to the local court of that area.

Call or visit the website for NYC borough contact information and services.

LEGAL HAND

www.legalhand.org

3213A 3rd Avenue, Bronx, NY 10451

Telephone: 718.618.2057

250 Kingston Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11213

Telephone: 718.619.4248

149-13 Jamaica Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11435

Telephone: 646.741.6411

Provides free legal information, assistance, and referrals to residents of New York from non-lawyer volunteers trained and assisted by a legal services attorney. Services include public benefits, employment, housing, family, immigration, health, divorce, and domestic violence. Visit the website for up-to-date information about in-person services.

LEGAL SERVICES NYC

40 Worth Street, Suite 606, New York, NY 10013

Legal Assistance Hotline: 917.661.4500 (Mon–Fri 9:30–4)

www.legalservicesnyc.org

Provides free civil legal services to those who are income-eligible in offices located throughout NYC. Advocates represent clients in matters relating to housing, public benefits, immigration, and more. Also advises and represents NYC residents facing discrimination and barriers to employment based on conviction history. Help is available in any language. Assistance is subject to capacity and eligibility for services.

LGBT BAR ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK

Mailing Address: 120 Wall Street, Floor 19, New York, NY 10005

Telephone: 212.353.9118

www.lgbtbarny.org

Provides several legal services to the LGBTQIA+ community, including an attorney referral service and in-person legal clinic. The free weekly legal clinic is held on Tuesday evenings at the LGBT Center in Manhattan and staffed by volunteer attorneys who are available to provide general guidance and legal referrals, but not legal representation. Visit the website for more information and clinic details.

MOBILIZATION FOR JUSTICE

<https://mobilizationforjustice.org>

424 East 147th Street, 3rd Floor, Bronx, NY 10455

Telephone: 212.417.3800

100 William Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.417.3700

Offers free legal assistance to low-income New Yorkers to resolve legal problems in the areas of housing, civil rights, disability rights, aging rights, bankruptcy, tax, consumer, employment, government benefits, immigration, and kinship care. Provides advice, counsel, and representation to help people with past criminal records re-enter the workforce. Online resources are available in Spanish and Chinese. Translators are available for most languages.

NEW YORK CITY BAR LEGAL REFERRAL SERVICE



42 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212.626.7373 / Spanish: 212.626.7374

www.nycbar.org/get-legal-help

Assists with finding help with legal matters. Offers referrals to an

experienced, screened and approved lawyer or the right resource. Initial consultations with the referred lawyer last up to 30 minutes and are \$35 or free, depending on the type of case. If further consultation or representation with the lawyer is needed, fees are agreed upon with the lawyer.

NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)— LEGAL COUNSELING PROJECT & CIVIL APPEALS PROJECT

ES

111 Broadway, New York, NY 10006
Telephone: 212.267.1525
www.nycla.org

The Legal Counseling Project provides free legal consultations to individuals seeking help in the areas of family law, landlord/tenant law, employment law, and tax law. Individuals are able to speak one-on-one with an attorney over the phone to discuss their legal problems, ask questions, and explore options and solutions. Interpreter services are available. Call or email probono@nycla.org for more information.

The Civil Appeals Project provides free representation to eligible litigants who have filed civil appeals in the Appellate Division—First Judicial Department. This program covers appeals of Article 78 decisions related to New York State or local agency decisions, and Family Law appeals including child or spousal support and matrimonial disputes.

NEW YORK LEGAL ASSISTANCE GROUP

ES

100 Pearl Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10004
Telephone: 212.613.5000
<https://nylag.org>

Provides free civil legal services and financial counseling to people experiencing poverty or crisis who would otherwise be unable to access legal assistance. Practice areas include healthcare, public benefits, tenants' rights, foreclosure prevention, consumer protec-

tion, special education, financial counseling, immigration, family law, LGBTQ law, and employment law.

PAROLE PREPARATION PROJECT



135 West 20th Street, Suite 302, c/o Law Office of Michelle L. Lewin, New York, NY 10011
Telephone: 347.620.5906
www.paroleprepny.org

An advocacy organization dedicated to supporting individuals incarcerated in NYS prisons who are serving parole-eligible life sentences. Volunteers receive specialized training to work closely with these individuals as they prepare for their upcoming parole board hearings. Priority is given to those with indeterminate life sentences who are 8–12 months away from their next hearing, as the organization cannot offer direct assistance to those with hearings further in the future. Upon release, individuals are welcomed into Survivors of the System (SOS), a network that provides support, engages in advocacy and activism, and advocates for the abolition of prisons. The organization also has Spanish-speaking staff available. Those eligible for assistance can reach out by sending a letter or emailing info@paroleprepny.org.

PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICES OF NEW YORK (PLSNY)



<https://plsny.org>

Provides free legal services to incarcerated people in NYS DOCCS prisons, with regional offices in Albany, Buffalo, Ithaca, and Newburgh. Handles cases involving mental health and medical care, discrimination, prison disciplinary matters, excessive use of force, conditions of confinement, sentence calculation, jail time credit, immigration, and clemency appeals. Decisions to provide legal counsel are determined on a case-by-case basis. Does not assist those in county, federal, and out of state facilities. The immigration unit provides legal representation to non-citizens incarcerated in any NYS prison who are in immigration removal

proceedings, as well as to non-citizens who are not incarcerated but who need immigration representation and are based in Albany county.

Central Office in Albany

41 State Street, Suite M112, Albany, NY 12207

Telephone: 518.438.8046 / Immigration Office: 518.694.8699

Facilities Served: Adirondack, Altona, Bare Hill, Clinton, CNYPC, Cossackie, Eastern, Edgecombe, Franklin, Gouverneur, Greene, Hale Creek, Hudson, Marcy, Mid-State, Mohawk, Otisville, Queensboro, Riverview, Shawangunk, Ulster, Upstate, Wallkill, Walsh, Washington, Woodbourne

Buffalo Office

14 Lafayette Square, Suite 510, Buffalo, NY 14203

Telephone: 716.854.1007 / Immigration Office: 716.844.8266

Facilities Served: Albion, Attica, Collins, Gowanda, Groveland, Lakeview, Orleans, Rochester, Wende, Wyoming

Ithaca Office

114 Prospect Street, Ithaca, NY 14850

Telephone: 607.273.2283

Facilities Served: Auburn, Cape Vincent, Cayuga, Elmira, Five Points, Southport, Watertown, Willard

Newburgh Office

10 Little Britain Road, Suite 204, Newburgh, NY 12550

Telephone: 845.391.3110

Facilities Served: Bedford Hills, Downstate, Fishkill, Green Haven, Sing Sing, Taconic

URBAN JUSTICE CENTER



40 Rector Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10006

Telephone: 646.602.5600

www.urbanjustice.org

A legal services and advocacy organization serving residents of NYC. Composed of eight initiatives consisting of the Domestic Violence Project, the Experience Justice Project, the Free to Be Youth Project, Freedom Agenda, the Mental Health Project, the

Safety Net Project, Sex Workers Project, and the Street Vendor Project. Runs clinics offering help with legal issues including housing, immigration, and family law throughout NYC. Contact for locations, hours, requirements, and services provided. An interpreting service is available.

Research Resources

Many of the city's public libraries have small circulating collections of legal handbooks for non-lawyers on topics like employment law, family law, tenants' rights, copyright and patent law, small business incorporation, and more.

COLUMBIA HUMAN RIGHTS LAW REVIEW—A JAILHOUSE LAWYER'S MANUAL (JLM)

435 West 116th Street, New York, NY 10027

<http://jlm.law.columbia.edu>

A handbook of legal rights and procedures designed for use by people in prisons, jails, and hospitals. In addition to the *JLM*, the *Texas and Louisiana State Supplement* and an *Immigration & the Consular Access Supplement* are available. Chapters are downloadable for free on the website. Visit the website for updated information on ordering physical copies.

THE JAILHOUSE LAWYER'S HANDBOOK

www.jailouselaw.org

The Center for Constitutional Rights
666 Broadway, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10012

The National Lawyers Guild, National Office
PO Box 1266, New York, NY 10009

A free resource for people in prison who wish to file a federal lawsuit addressing poor conditions in prison or abuse by prison

staff. Visit the website to place an order for a currently incarcerated friend or loved one. People can also write to either address for a paper copy.

PRISON BOOK PROGRAM—THE INSIDER’S GUIDE TO JAILHOUSE LAW

1306 Hancock Street, Suite 100, Quincy, MA 02169
<https://prisonbookprogram.org>

A free legal resource with information including the legal system and rights, practical advice about how to do legal work, and information about avenues for relief. Incarcerated people can write to the address above to request a copy.

People can also request *The National Prisoners’s Resource List*, a free resource that provides information about places that offer support, advocacy, health care, and creative outlets to people who are incarcerated, or request free books by genre.

LAWHELPNY

www.lawhelpny.org

An online tool for New Yorkers with legal problems. Information on the website includes a directory of free legal services throughout NYS, information on legal rights in a broad range of areas, information on the NYS court system, and a live chat feature that offers real time assistance Mon–Thu, 9am–9pm.

PUBLIC ACCESS LAW LIBRARIES

The following are public access law libraries located in New York City. Please be aware that law librarians cannot give legal advice, interpret legal material, or recommend language for use on legal documents. Contact for updated information about services and hours. Visit <https://askalawlibrarian.nycourts.gov> for remote legal reference services via online chat, text, or email.

Bronx Supreme Court Law Library
851 Grand Concourse, Room 214, Bronx, NY 10451
Telephone: 718.618.3710

Kings County Supreme Court Law Library
360 Adams Street, Room 349, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 347.296.1144

New York County Law Library
80 Centre Street, Room 242, New York, NY 10013
Telephone: 646.386.3715

Queens Supreme Court Law Library
88-11 Sutphin Blvd., Room 65, Jamaica, NY 11435
Telephone: 718.298.1206

Richmond County Law Library
25 Hyatt Street, Room 515, Staten Island, NY 10301
Telephone: 718.675.8711

Bail

Bail Update

In January 2020, bail legislation was implemented eliminating money bail and pretrial detention in some cases. It has since been modified many times, including in 2023.

Visit <https://datacollaborativeforjustice.org/work/practitioner-resources/resources-bail-reform-in-new-york-across-the-us> for more information on the amended law and the impact on bail reform.

The following information is compiled from the NYC 311 website. For more information visit <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-01398>.

What is bail?

Bail is an amount of money set by a judge at court. The stated purpose is to ensure that a defendant attends future court dates. If a defendant's family or friends are able to provide the cash bail

to the court (to post bail), the defendant is released before trial and must attend all court dates. If a defendant does not show up for a court date, the court may keep the bail (the money has been forfeited) and issue a warrant for the defendant's arrest. If a defendant makes all court appearances, the bail will be refunded back, minus a 3% fee if the defendant is found or pleads guilty. If a defendant cannot post bail, they will be held at a Department of Correction (DOC) facility until bail is paid, the case has been disposed of, or they are released for another reason. A judge can set a bond instead of bail. A bond is a legal contract that requires someone to pay money if the defendant does not appear at a court date.

When is bail set?

Bail is generally set at the first court appearance (arraignment), which must occur within 24 hours of the defendant's arrest. If the defendant pleads not guilty at arraignment, a judge has four release options. They may release the defendant on their own recognizance, meaning the defendant is free to go without paying any money or providing a bond; the judge may set bail in various forms, which the defendant (or friends or family) must post to be released; the judge may release the defendant to a supervised release program, which will require the defendant to check in by phone and in person; and lastly, for certain felonies, bail may be denied and the defendant will be remanded to DOC custody.

How to pay bail in person

To post bail, you must present personal identification and provide the New York State Identification (NYSID) or Book and Case number of the person to be bailed.

Bail will be accepted in any of the following forms:

- US cash for the full amount;
- Cashier's/teller's check, in any amount not exceeding the bail figure;
- Money order from Federal Express, US Postal Service, Travelers Express Company, Western Union, or a private bank—up to \$1,000
- Credit or debit card

Personal checks are not accepted. Cashier's checks, teller's

checks, or money orders must be made payable to the New York City Department of Correction. The amount of each money order must not exceed \$1,000. If the total bail amount is more than \$1,000, you can pay with multiple money orders or a combination of money orders, checks, and cash. The total amount you pay must exactly match the bail amount. No change will be provided.

Call **311** for the most updated list of locations where you can pay bail. At the time of publication, you can pay bail in person at any of the following locations where DOC accepts bail, regardless of where the individual is housed:

Rikers Island

16-16 Hazen Street, East Elmhurst, NY 11370

Open 24/7

Manhattan Detention Complex (also known as The Tombs)

125 White Street, New York, NY 10013

Open 24/7

Bronx Criminal Court

265 East 161 Street, Lower Level, Room M-05C, Bronx, NY 10451

Open 7 days a week, 8am–1am

Brooklyn Criminal Court

120 Schermerhorn Street, 1st Floor, Room 101C, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Open 7 days a week, 8:30am–1am

Queens Courts

126-01 Queens Blvd., Kew Gardens, NY 11415

Open Mon–Fri 9–5

For youth incarcerated at the Horizon and Crossroads Juvenile Centers, bail may be paid at each of the Juvenile Centers. The Juvenile Centers cannot accept payments for individuals detained at other facilities.

How to pay bail online

You can pay bail online if:

- A judge has set credit card bail as a form of bail payment for that individual

- The individual doesn't have any surety conditions, such as a surety interview
- DOC has logged the individual's bail conditions into their Inmate Lookup Service

Online bail payment is not available on any court dates following arraignment. If you want to pay bail on any court date other than arraignment, you should pay directly at the courthouse's cashier window.

To pay bail online, you first need to look up the individual using their first and last name, NYSID, or Book and Case Number, using the DOC Inmate Lookup Service online at www.nyc.gov/site/doc/inmate-info/inmate-lookup.page. There may be a short waiting period after arraignment before the individual's information is logged into the system.

If bail is eligible to be paid online, clicking on the Pay Bail button on the Inmate Details page will take you to a new page where you can begin the transaction. If the Pay Bail button is grayed out, then the individual isn't eligible for online bail payment yet, or their information has not yet been entered into the system.

The online payment system accepts credit and debit cards and can be used to pay bails of any amount. You will be charged a non-refundable 2% fee per transaction.

If you have questions about whether an individual is eligible for bail, contact the individual's attorney.

If the person you are paying bail for has a warrant, hold, or additional case, they may not be released until those additional issues are resolved. You will receive a refund from the Department of Finance roughly eight weeks after the case has been resolved. Your refund will not include the 2% online bail processing fee. An additional 3% will be taken if the defendant is found guilty.

What if the defendant misses a court appearance?

If a defendant misses a court appearance, the judge may issue a court order for the Department of Finance to keep the cash bail, called a "forfeit order." You should receive a letter notifying you that your cash bail has been forfeited by the court. You

should contact the court that ordered the forfeiture or the District Attorney’s Office within 45 days of the date of the letter to learn the reason for the forfeiture. There is a procedure called “remission of forfeiture” which allows you to apply for the cash bail to be returned once it has been forfeited. You may want to hire a lawyer to help you with this, but you can also do it on your own. You must apply for this remission within one year of the date that the court ordered the bail forfeited.

What is a commercial bail bond?

Commercial bail bondsmen charge a fee and require collateral from a defendant’s friends and family to write a bond and post that bond with the court to secure a defendant’s release pretrial. Commercial bail bond providers commonly charge 10% of the total bail, plus collateral. The collateral required is typically property, including real estate and cars, and a judge must sign-off on the bail bond and the amount of collateral. By issuing a bail bond, the bondsman commits to paying the court the full amount of the defendant’s bail, should the defendant fail to return to court. If you have the cash for bail available, you may prefer to pay the bail directly, to avoid fees charged by commercial bail bondsmen.

The **NYS Department of Financial Services** website has bail information for consumers, including rights and more, at www.dfs.ny.gov/consumers/bail.

The **NYC Department of Finance** has information on how to get a bail refund, available at www.nyc.gov/site/finance/sheriff-courts/courts-bail-get-refund.page.

Locating Someone in Custody

FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS (BOP)

Telephone: 202.307.3198
www.bop.gov/locations

Call or visit the website for a comprehensive listing of federal

detention centers throughout the United States, along with information about an incarcerated person.

US IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE)



Telephone: 888.351.4024

<https://locator.ice.gov/odls>

Call or visit the website for information about people held in ICE custody. Call Mon–Fri 8–8 Eastern Time (excluding holidays). Language assistance is available.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION (DOCCS)



Telephone: 518.457.5000

<https://doccs.ny.gov>

Call or visit the website for a list of NYS prison facilities and parole offices, their addresses and phone numbers, information to locate someone who is currently incarcerated or on parole, and information on visitation, parole, policies, and more.

NYC CENTRAL BOOKING



Telephone: 311

Call for information to locate someone who has been arrested. Provides information about people who were arrested in the last 24–48 hours and who have not yet seen a judge. Information provided on whether or not someone is in police custody, and where they will be arraigned. No information will be given about the arrest or charge.

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/doc

Call or visit the website for information about people in jail held by the NYC DOC. The website provides a list of NYC jails, information on how and when a person can be visited, how and where to pay bail, and how to place money in someone's account.

NYS UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM—WEBCRIMS

https://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/webcrim_attorney/AttorneyWelcome

Provides information on criminal cases with future appearance dates for selected New York State Courts of criminal jurisdiction. The case identifier search option allows people to search by the case number or summons number. The defendant search allows people to search by first name, last name, or the name of corporation, and provides attorney information including name and number.

Voting Registration & Rights

Voting with a Conviction Record in New York

In 2021, legislation to permanently and automatically restore the right of people on parole to vote in all elections was signed into law. Unless currently incarcerated from a felony conviction, New Yorkers with a conviction record are eligible to vote.

In New York, you can vote with a conviction record if you:

- were convicted of a misdemeanor; or
- are on parole; or
- are on probation; or

- were not sentenced to prison or had your prison sentence suspended; or
- served your maximum prison sentence; or
- were pardoned.

You are eligible to vote while serving a misdemeanor sentence or if you are incarcerated pre-sentence on any charges. You may be eligible to vote while serving a local jail sentence for a felony conviction if you have been granted a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities for that conviction. If you are serving a felony sentence in state prison, you will not be eligible to vote until your release. You must re-register to vote after you have served your maximum sentence or are released on parole.

You may still register and vote in New York if you have completed either a federal felony conviction, or a felony conviction in another state.

If you plan to vote, you must register to vote if:

- you have never registered to vote, or
- you registered to vote before being sentenced to jail or prison for a felony conviction.

For more information on registering to vote, including the online voter registration portal and forms needed to register by mail or in-person, visit <https://elections.ny.gov/voter-registration-process>.

If you are in jail awaiting trial or serving time for a misdemeanor or violation you may vote with an absentee ballot. You must complete and mail an absentee ballot request form. To request an absentee ballot application you can call the **Board of Elections in New York City** at **866.868.3692**.

Your Right to Vote

The following information is from www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/voting-rights and outlines some scenarios that may come up when trying to exercise the right to vote.

If you run into any problems or have questions on Election Day, call the **Election Protection Hotline**:

- English: 866.687.8683
- Spanish: 888.839.8682

- Arabic: 844.925.5287
- Bengali, Cantonese, Hindi, Urdu, Korean, Mandarin, Tagalog, or Vietnamese: 888.274.8683

General Rights on Election Days

Your rights:

- If the polls close while you're still in line, stay in line—you have the right to vote.
- If you make a mistake on your ballot, ask for a new one.
- If the machines are down at your polling place, ask for a paper ballot.

Your rights if the poll worker says your name is not on the list of registered voters:

- Voters are entitled to a provisional ballot, even if they aren't in the poll book.
- After Election Day, election officials must investigate whether you are qualified to vote and registered. If you are qualified and registered, they will count your provisional ballot.

What to do:

- Ask the poll worker to double-check for your name on the list of registered voters. Make sure to spell your name out for the poll worker.
- If your name is not on the list, ask if there is a supplemental list of voters.
- If the poll worker still cannot find your name, confirm that you are at the correct polling place. Request that the poll workers check a statewide system (if one is available) to see if you are registered to vote at a different polling place. If the poll worker does not have access to a statewide system, ask them to call the main election office. If you are registered at a different location, in most instances you will have to travel to that location to cast a regular ballot.
- If the poll worker still cannot find your name or if you cannot travel to the correct polling place, ask for a provisional ballot.

Voters with a disability

Your rights:

- Under federal law, all polling places for federal elections must be fully accessible to older adults and voters with disabili-

ties. Simply allowing curbside voting is not enough to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements.

- In federal elections, every polling place must have at least one voting system that allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently. Usually, this is a machine that can read the ballot to you (for people with vision disabilities or dyslexia), and let you vote by pushing buttons (for people with mobility disabilities).
- Under federal law, voters with disabilities and voters who have difficulty reading or writing English have the right to receive in-person help at the polls from the person of their choice. This helper cannot be the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an agent or officer of the voter's union. The helper must respect the voter's privacy, not looking at the voter's ballot unless the voter asks them to do so.
- Election officials (including poll workers) must make reasonable accommodations as needed to help you vote.
- Election officials must provide you with help if it's possible for them to do so.
- A voter with a mental disability cannot be turned away from the polls because a poll worker thinks they are not 'qualified' to vote.

What to do:

- You can bring a family member, friend, or another person of your choice to assist you at the polls. Do not bring your employer or an agent of your employer or union.
- If you bring a person to assist you, let the poll workers know when you check in. They may ask you to swear under oath that you have a disability and that you have asked that person to help you. Your helper may also be required to sign a form swearing that they did not tell you how to vote.
- If there are long lines and you have a physical or mental health condition or disability that makes it difficult for you to stand in line, tell a poll worker.
- Tell election officials what you need. For example, if it's hard for you to stand, they should provide you with a chair or a place to sit while you wait. If the crowds or noise are hard for you, election officials can find a quiet place for you to wait and call you when it's your turn to vote.

- If you are not able to enter your polling place because the pathway to it is not fully accessible, ask poll workers for curbside assistance.
- If you have difficulty using the materials provided to make your ballot selections, review, or cast your ballot, let a poll worker know and ask for the help you need.
- If you face any challenges in voting privately and independently or are unable to cast your vote, report the problem to the **Election Protection Hotline**. Trained attorneys can assist you and make sure that other voters do not experience the same problem.

Additional information:

- Find detailed voting guides from the **Bazon Center for Mental Health Law** at www.bazon.org/our-work/voting.
- For a toolkit on voting with a disability from the **Autistic Self Advocacy Network** visit <https://autisticadvocacy.org/policy/toolkits/voting>.
- For accessible trainings on how to exercise your right to vote with a disability by **SABE's GoVoter Project** visit www.sabeusa.org/govoter.
- A course on polling place accessibility requirements is available at <https://rockymountainada.talentlms.com/catalog/info/id:133>.
- For voting information in American Sign Language, visit <https://signvote.org>.

Voters who speak English less than “very well”

Your rights:

- Under federal law, voters who have a hard time reading or writing English may receive in-person help at the polls from the person of their choice. This person cannot be the voter's employer, an agent of the voter's employer, or an agent or officer of the voter's union.
- The federal Voting Rights Act contains a number of protections for voters who require language help. In NYC, depending on where you live, language assistance is available in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Bengali. All registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, and other information relating to voting, including ballots, must be provided in other languages. Visit www.vote.nyc/page/information or call **866.868.3692** for

more information, including which polling sites have interpreters available.

What to do:

- You can bring a family member, friend, or another person of your choice to help you at the polls. Do not bring your employer, or an agent of your employer or union.
- If you live in a county with bilingual voting help for a language you speak, you can request oral help from a bilingual poll worker and ask for voting materials, such as a ballot, in that language.

If someone is interfering with your right to vote

Examples of voter intimidation:

- Aggressively questioning voters about their citizenship, conviction record, or other qualifications to vote.
- Falsely representing oneself as an elections official.
- Displaying false or misleading signs about voter fraud and related criminal penalties.
- Other forms of harassment, particularly harassment targeting non-English speakers and voters of color.
- Spreading false information about voter requirements.

Your rights:

- It's illegal to intimidate voters and a federal crime to "intimidate, threaten, [or] coerce ... any other person for the purpose of interfering with the right of [that] other person to vote or to vote as he may choose."
- You do not need to speak English to vote, in any state. You do not need to pass a test to vote, in any state. In New York, only first time voters need to present photo identification if they did not provide valid identification at the time they registered to vote.

What to do if you experience voter intimidation:

- Report intimidation to your local board of elections. Their offices are open on Election Day.
- In New York, you can give a sworn statement to the poll worker that you satisfy the qualifications to vote in your state, and then proceed to cast a ballot.

Voter Suppression

Voter suppression is any effort, either legal or illegal, by way of

laws, administrative rules, and/or tactics that prevent citizens from registering to vote or voting. Examples of voter suppression include, but are not limited to, voter ID laws, voter registration restriction, voter intimidation, felony disenfranchisement, voter purges, polling site closures, and gerrymandering. To learn more about voter suppression visit www.aclu.org/news/civil-liberties/block-the-vote-voter-suppression-in-2020.

BOARD OF ELECTIONS IN NEW YORK CITY



Telephone: 866.868.3692 / TTY: 212.487.5496

www.vote.nyc

Call to request a voter registration form, an absentee ballot, or for information about registering to vote in NYC.

Obtaining Personal Documents

The Legal Action Center recommends that individuals keep a copy of their prison release papers, as they might prove useful in becoming eligible for certain benefits or programs. If they are lost, people formerly incarcerated in state facilities can write to those facilities for copies. Those formerly incarcerated in NYC may call **311** and ask for Inmate Jail Release Services.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA)



Telephone: 800.772.1213 / TTY: 800.325.0778

www.ssa.gov

You can create an account to apply for a replacement Social Security card online if you:

- Are a US citizen age 18 or older with a US mailing address (this includes APO, FPO, and DPO addresses);
- Are not requesting a name change or any other change to your card; and

- Have a driver’s license or state-issued identification card from a participating state, including New York.

If you are unable to apply for a card online, you can contact Social Security by phone Mon–Fri 8–7.

Call **311** or visit <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-03117> for the most updated information on Social Security card center services, locations in NYC, and documentation needed.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES (DMV)

Telephone: **518.486.9786** or **800.698.2931**
<https://dmv.ny.gov>

Provides information on how to obtain a NYS driver’s license. A person of any age who does not have a driver’s license can apply for a nondriver’s ID card. This card contains the same personal information, photograph, signature, and special protection against alteration and fraud as a photo driver’s license. Visit the website to renew registration online, download forms, and find the location of a local center.

Real ID Information

At the time of publication, beginning in May 2025 only the Enhanced or REAL ID will be accepted to get on a domestic flight (within the US), or to enter certain federal buildings or military bases (unless you have a passport or another federally-accepted form of ID). Visit <https://dmv.ny.gov/get-enhanced-or-real-id> for more information.

Documented has written a guide called *Fly With REAL ID: What Migrants Need To Know*, available at <https://documentedny.com/2024/07/24/fly-real-id-requirements-migrants>.

NYS UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM—NAME AND/OR SEX DESIGNATION CHANGE

25 Beaver Street, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 800.268.7869 / TTY: 711

www.nycourts.gov/courts/nyc/civil/namechanges.shtml

Those who live in NYC may bring a name change or sex designation change proceeding in any county in the city. It costs \$65 to change a name and/or sex designation in Civil Court. Forms can be found on the civil court's website or one may go to the name/sex designation change location in each courthouse and get the forms from the court clerk.

For a name change, applicants need to bring either an original or certified copy of their birth certificate if they were born in NYS. If the applicant was not born in NYS, they need to bring proof of their birth, as well. The papers will be reviewed by the court clerk and submitted to a judge.

Parents or legal guardians who want to change a child's name or sex designation, need a notarized consent form signed by any other parent or legal guardian who is not a petitioner. If consent cannot be obtained, then the other parent or legal guardian must be given notice of the name change and/or sex designation change case and come back to court to see the judge. If an address for the other parent or legal guardian is not known, steps must be taken to locate them. If they cannot be located, the court will consider the name and/or sex designation change without their consent. If an applicant wants to change the name of a child who is 14 years of age or older, a notarized consent form must be signed by the child.

Name change and sex designation change requests can be viewed by anyone because they are public records. If the name change and/or sex designation change needs to be kept private for safety or other reasons, the clerk should be told before the petition is filed. The Clerk will provide information on how one can request to seal the court records.

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
(DOH)—OFFICE OF VITAL RECORDS** 

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/vitalrecords

Call or visit the website for updated information on how to obtain a birth certificate for a person born in the five boroughs of NYC.

Links to information for people born outside of NYC, including elsewhere in NYS, is located online at www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm.

IDNYC

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/idnyc/index.page

A city-issued identification card available to all NYC residents ages 10 and over. Immigration status and conviction history do not matter. Applications are available online in more than 25 languages. Call or visit the website for information on appointments, applications, renewals, and replacements; to learn more about the ID; the accepted forms of identity and residency documentation; and enrollment center location information.

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK—MARRIAGE BUREAU

Telephone: 311

www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/html/marriage/license.shtml

Call or visit the website for updated information on how to obtain a marriage license. To schedule an appointment visit Project Cupid at www.nyc.gov/Cupid.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)—PUERTO RICO VITAL RECORDS

Department of Health, Demographic Registry

PO Box 11854, Fernandez Juncos Station, San Juan, PR 00910

Telephone: 787.765.2929

www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/puerto_rico.htm

Provides information on how to obtain birth, death, marriage, and divorce certificates. If using an Express Service (FedEx, UPS, DHL,

USPS Express or Priority Mail), applications to obtain records must be sent to the following address: **414 Barbosa Avenue, Lincoln Building, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00925.**



Information for People Convicted of a Sex Offense

The New York Courts website provides basic information for people convicted of a sex offense, including risk levels, the Sex Offender Registration Act (SORA) Correction Law, and obligations. The following is from www.nycourts.gov/courthelp/Criminal/sexOffenders.shtml.

People convicted of a sex offense must register with the NY State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).

Risk Levels for People Convicted of a Sex Offense

There are three levels used to designate the risk of re-offense. This is the court's estimation of the likelihood that the person will commit another sex related crime. The level is decided by the court and includes:

- Level 1 – lowest risk
- Level 2 – moderate risk
- Level 3 – highest risk

There are also three additional designations that the court can assign: sexual predator, sexually violent offender, and predicate sex offender. These designations and the risk level determine reporting requirements and how much information is open to the public.

Obligations

People convicted of a sex offense have many reporting responsibilities and requirements. Some of these include:

- Reporting where they live to DCJS annually.
- Notifying DCJS in writing of a new address no later than 10 days after moving.
- Reporting in person to a local police agency to have a current

picture taken every three years (Level 1 and 2) or every year (Level 3 offenders).

- Notifying DCJS in writing of any school they are attending, enrolled in, living at or employed by. Any changes must be reported to DCJS no later than 10 days after the change.
- Providing written information to DCJS about their internet service providers, internet screen names and email accounts.
- People with Level 3 and/or a sexual predator designation must personally verify their addresses every 90 days with law enforcement. Law enforcement may take a picture of a person if their appearance has changed and is Level 3.
- Level 2 and 3 have to report the address of their employer to the DCJS.

Failure to perform any of the registration obligations is a felony.

Petition for Relief or Modification

Corrections Law §168-O states that a person convicted of a sex offense can file a motion to be removed from the registry or change their risk level. After filing the motion, the person is entitled to a court appointed attorney if they can't afford one.

Removal: After 30 years, a person with a Level 2 risk level (who has not been designated a sexual predator, sexually violent offender, or predicate sex offender), can petition the court to be relieved from all registration requirements and be removed from the registry. This petition can be made once every 2 years starting 30 years after the first registration.

Modification: A person on the sex offender registry can petition the sentencing court or the court that made the determination regarding the level, for an order downwardly modifying their risk level. This petition can be made once per year. The petition should say which new level is being requested and the reasons why the change should be granted. For example, a person designated at Level 3 might ask the court to change to Level 2 because there have been no new sexual offenses for many years, and/or they have been in treatment, and/or the risk level is keeping them from getting a job or housing, and/or they have demonstrated healthy changes in their life. It is suggested to speak to an attorney.

The District Attorney can also ask the court to modify the risk level

if a person has been convicted of a new crime or has violated a condition that the District Attorney thinks increases the risk of re-offense. For more information visit www.nycourts.gov/courthelp/Criminal/sexOffenderModification.shtml.

Discrimination, Grievances, & Rights

For information on avoiding discrimination while looking for work, see [page 397](#) in *The Job Search*.

Grievance process while incarcerated

According to the Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA), you must “exhaust” (use up) all of the available grievance procedures before you can take your complaint to court.

If you have an issue that cannot be resolved after you have verbally consulted with your Housing Officer, Counselor, or Legal or Grievance Coordinator, you may present a complaint in writing to the Grievance Coordinator in your facility who will guide you through the steps to a formal resolution. You may submit a complaint about things that directly affect you such as department policies, how the policies are carried out, or someone else’s behavior, including an officer.

How to write an effective grievance

When using the Inmate Grievance Process, you should follow several guidelines to increase your chances of obtaining relief (help). First, if you file a formal grievance with a grievance resolution committee, write out your grievance in detail and list exactly what attempts you made to resolve the problem. If you do not try to resolve the problem on your own, your grievance may be dismissed and closed at the grievance committee hearing. Second, your complaint must show that you are personally affected by the policy or issue that you are filing a grievance against. If that is not the case, your complaint must show that you will be affected at some point in the future unless relief is granted and changes are made. Third, you should state the problem accurately and precisely. Using inflammatory language (such as curse words) in

your complaint will reduce your chances of success. Fourth, the more specific you are about the relief you are seeking, the more likely you are to receive it. You should list in detail every aspect of relief that you seek because the Inmate Grievance Resolution Committee may not consider types of relief that you do not specifically request. For example, explain the conditions or policies you want changed.

The *Jailhouse Lawyer’s Manual (JLM)* has an entire chapter on how to file an effective grievance. See the full listing for *JLM* on [page 209](#).

NYS OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  

Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 2, 16th Floor, Albany, NY 12223

Hotline: 800.367.4448

<https://ig.ny.gov/form/complaint-form-long>

Contact to file a complaint regarding conditions in NYS correctional facilities. Write or call the toll-free hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The hotline puts callers in contact with trained staff who can discuss specifics of complaints.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION (DOCCS)—OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS (OSI)  

**Office of Special Investigations—Intake Unit
NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
The Harriman State Office Campus**

1220 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12226

Telephone: 844.674.4697

<https://doccs.ny.gov/doccs-office-special-investigations-osi>

The organization within DOCCS whose mandate is to investigate allegations of criminal activity related to DOCCS and any other wrongdoing within DOCCS. Contact to file a complaint about physical or sexual abuse, drug trafficking, contraband possession, staff

misconduct and corruption, and suspected terrorist activities committed by anyone at DOCCS facilities. Provide details about the incident, who was involved, time and place of the incident, the identity of any victim, and names of any witnesses.

NYC BOARD OF CORRECTION (BOC)

2 Lafayette Street, Suite 1221, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.669.7900

www.nyc.gov/site/boc/index.page

An oversight board that regulates, monitors, and inspects NYC jails. If you are within the NYC jail system, contact to file a complaint.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION (FTC)—IDENTITY THEFT RECOVERY

Telephone: 877.438.4338 / TTY: 866.653.4261

www.identitytheft.gov

The website provides checklists of what to do immediately after an individual realizes their personal information has been stolen and used, how to repair the damage, and potential additional steps that may be necessary.

USA.GOV—COMPLAINTS

Telephone: 844.872.4681

www.usa.gov/complaints

Provides information on how to file a complaint involving government agencies, products and services, travel, housing, and banking. Also provides information on how to protect oneself from and respond to scams, frauds, and identity theft, and how to stop unwanted mail and telemarketing calls.

NYS DIVISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS—HATE AND BIAS PREVENTION UNIT

Hotline: 844.662.4283

<https://forms.ny.gov/s3/DHR-Bias-Incident-Form>

Call Mon–Fri 9–5 or visit the website to report a bias or hate incident.

NYC—311

Telephone: 311 or 212.639.9675 / TTY: 711

<https://portal.311.nyc.gov>

Provides information on all NYC government services. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services are provided in over 170 languages. Use this service to:

- Report potholes, blocked driveways, broken streetlights, or other neighborhood problems
- Locate public hospitals and clinics
- Find contact information for utility companies
- Locate a towed vehicle
- Find public school information
- Learn about programs designed for small businesses
- Get subway or bus information
- Pay a parking ticket online
- View street cleaning and trash collection schedules
- View NYC job openings
- View upcoming civil-service exams
- Report heat, hot water, or residential maintenance issues

NYC CIVILIAN COMPLAINT REVIEW BOARD

100 Church Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 800.341.2272 or 311

www.nyc.gov/site/ccrb/index.page

Call to make a complaint against NYC police officers in cases of

the use of excessive or unnecessary force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, or the use of offensive language. The complaint form is also available online.

NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Telephone: 212.416.0197 or 311

www.nyc.gov/humanrights

Contact to file a complaint of discrimination in employment, housing, and/or public accommodations based on age, race, color, religion/creed, natural hair or hairstyles, actual or perceived height or weight, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, gender (including sexual harassment), gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, veteran or active military service member status, pregnancy, marital status, and partnership status.

In employment, the law affords additional protection against discrimination based on arrest or conviction record; credit history; status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, or stalking; pre-employment marijuana testing; unemployment status; sexual and reproductive health decisions; salary history; pay transparency; and status as a caregiver (for a child or sick family member).

In housing, the law affords additional protections based on lawful source of income (including housing subsidies such as Section 8, and LINC and public assistance programs such as SSD and SSI), lawful occupation, family status (including presence of children), and status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, or stalking.

The law also prohibits retaliation and protects against discriminatory harassment and bias-based profiling by law enforcement.

The law's protection includes discrimination based on an individual's actual status as well as what people think or perceive an individual's status to be. Individuals are also protected based on their association with other individuals who fall into a protected category.

Anyone who has reason to believe that they have been a victim of discrimination in NYC may file a complaint with the Commission. Complaints must be filed within one year of the last incident of alleged discrimination or three years for cases involving gender-based harassment.

For in-person or borough-specific inquiries:

1932 Arthur Avenue, Room 203A, Bronx, NY 10457
Telephone: 718.579.6900

25 Chapel Street, Suite 1001, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.722.3130

22 Reade Street, New York, NY 10007
Telephone: 212.306.7450

153-01 Jamaica Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11432
Telephone: 718.657.2465

60 Bay Street, 7th Floor, Staten Island, NY 10301
Telephone: 718.390.8506

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORKER
PROTECTION (DCWP)** 

42 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
Telephone: 311
www.nyc.gov/dca

Provides assistance to consumers, workers, and business owners in NYC. Information on workers' rights, job searching, free one-on-one financial counseling, tax prep, and a guide to business licenses is available. Contact to file a complaint if you believe you have been a victim of consumer fraud, workplace violations, or wage theft.

NYC PUBLIC ADVOCATE 

Hotline: 212.669.7250

www.pubadvocate.nyc.gov

Provides information about housing, education, government transparency, business assistance, consumer advice, and more. Assists with complaints and inquiries involving government-related services and regulations. Call or visit the website for information on appointments.

Less Is More Act (LIM)

On March 1, 2022, the Less Is More: Community Supervision Revocation Reform Act took effect. The law restricts the use of incarceration for breaking noncriminal parole rules (“technical violations”), bolsters due process for people accused of violations, and provides “earned-time” credits to those who follow the rules. The new law also requires the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) to provide people on parole access to free community-based drug treatment and mental health services.

The following is from <https://legalaidnyc.org/get-help/parole/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-less-is-more-act> and translations are available for download in the following languages: Arabic, French, Hindi, Kreyol, Russian, and Spanish.

LIM affects anyone who is serving a NYS-imposed sentence of community supervision and is being monitored by DOCCS. People on life parole and those on parole for sex offenses may be impacted differently.

LIM creates a pathway to finish parole early through earned time credits:

- Most people on parole will earn 30 days of time credit for every 30 days in the community. That means if a person on parole has no sustained violations for 30 days, they will have 30 days taken off their parole sentence.
- People on life parole are not eligible to earn time credits.

LIM ends automatic detention and incarceration for certain technical violations:

- Instead of being automatically jailed for a technical violation, people accused of these violations will receive a notice of violation to appear in a community court. Technical violations are alleged conduct that doesn't involve the commission of a crime or violation of certain special conditions if on parole for a sex offense. Some examples of technical violations are a missed curfew, missed office report, or a positive drug test.
- People accused of non-technical violations or those who are accused of absconding and did not appear for their notice of violation will receive a criminal court recognizance hearing within 24 hours of their arrest to determine whether they will stay incarcerated pending the outcome of the violation proceedings. A non-technical violation is when a parole officer (PO) accuses a person of committing a new felony or new misdemeanor or conduct by a person on parole for a sex offense that violates a specific condition reasonably related to such offense.

LIM improves due process:

- Establishes the right to counsel at every stage of the parole revocation process and raises the standard of proof at every stage of the violation process.
- Anyone accused of a parole violation is automatically entitled to a preliminary hearing. For detained individuals, preliminary hearings must take place within five days of when they are arrested on the parole warrant. For non-detained individuals, preliminary hearings must take place within 10 days of the individual's release on recognizance or when the notice violation was issued.
- If sufficient proof is found at the preliminary hearing, the individual will proceed to a final hearing. For detained individuals, the final hearing must take place within 30 days of when sufficient proof is found at a preliminary hearing. For non-detained individuals, hearings must be held within 45 days.
- Hearings must be conducted in the community rather than inside jails.

LIM sets limits on periods of incarceration for technical violations:

- Reincarceration is not permitted for the following technical violations: violation of curfew, alcohol/substance use (unless the conviction is for driving under the influence), failure to notify PO of a change in employment status, failure to pay surcharges

and fees, obtaining a driver's license or driving a car with a valid license unless explicitly prohibited by the person's conviction, and failure to notify PO of police contact unless intended to hide illegal behavior.

- For all other technical violations, jail time varies: the 1st and 2nd violations are 0 days, the 3rd violation is 7 days, the 4th violation is 15 days, and the 5th violation or more is 30 days.
- For absconding, which is defined in LIM as intentionally avoiding supervision by failing to maintain contact with the assigned parole office, not notifying parole officer of a change in residence, and that parole officer could not successfully re-engage with reasonable efforts: the 1st violation is 7 days, the 2nd violation is 15 days, and the 3rd violation is 30 days.

For more information about the law and the Less Is More NY campaign, visit <https://lessismoreny.org>.

If you have questions or need legal guidance on your parole situation, call **The Legal Aid Society's Parole Revocation Defense Unit** at **212.577.3500**.



HALT Solitary Confinement Act

The Humane Alternatives to Long-Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act took effect March, 2022.

The following information is from www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/senate-passes-halt-solitary-confinement-act.

The HALT Act requires jails and prison in NY to:

- Limit the use of segregated confinement in state prisons and county jails and implement alternative rehabilitative measures, including the creation of Residential Rehabilitation Units (RRU).
- Limit the use of segregated confinement for all incarcerated persons to 15 days.
- Expand the definition of segregated confinement to include any

form of cell confinement where an individual is held for more than 17 hours a day.

- Mandate additional out-of-cell time and rehabilitative programming for individuals diverted to rehabilitative units after the 15-day limit has been reached.
- Prohibit segregated confinement for special populations for any period of time. Special populations are: individuals age 21 or younger, individuals age 55 and over, individuals with a disability, and individuals who are pregnant, up to 8 weeks post-partum, or caring for children in a facility.
- Prohibit the denial of services, treatment, or basic needs such as clothing, food, and bedding while an individual is held in segregated confinement.
- Mandate that staff must undergo 37 hours and 30 minutes of initial training prior to assignment on segregated confinement units and 21 additional hours, annually, after assignment.
- Add due process protections by prohibiting placement in segregated confinement prior to a disciplinary hearing and by allowing access to counsel.
- Require DOCCS to publish monthly reports on its website with semi-annual and annual cumulative reports of the total number of people in segregated confinement.
- Prohibit the use of restraints on RRU residents except when officials make an “individual assessment” that not cuffing someone would pose a “significant and unreasonable” safety risk.

If your rights are being violated and you wish to report it contact:

In NYC:

- **The Legal Aid Society’s Prisoners’ Rights Project at 212.577.3530**

In NYS:

- **Prisoners’ Legal Services of New York** (contact information starting on [page 207](#)).
- **Correctional Association of NY (CANY) at 212.254.5700**

Banning solitary confinement in NYC jails—Local Law 42

Local Law No. 42 bans the use of solitary confinement—defined to mean “placement of an incarcerated person in a cell, other

than at night for sleeping for a period not to exceed eight hours in any 24-hour period or during the day for a count not to exceed two hours in any 24-hour period”—in NYC jails. It also provides individuals in custody due process protections prior to being placed in restrictive housing or continued use of restraints. The law sets limits on how the NYC DOC can use emergency lock-ins and requires regular reporting on NYC DOC’s use of de-escalation confinement, restrictive housing, and emergency lock-ins.

At the time of creating this publication, NYC’s Mayor has continued to issue “Emergency Executive Orders” blocking the law from going into effect.

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

The PREA information in this book was compiled from several sources, most listed with web addresses in each section, and the ACLU’s toolkit found online at www.aclu.org/other/prison-rape-elimination-act-prea-toolkit-end-abuse-protecting-lgbti-prisoners-sexual-assault.

What is PREA?

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) is a federal law passed by Congress in 2003. The intention of PREA is to address the prevention, reduction, and elimination of sexual assault and rape within all jails and prisons, including juvenile facilities and some immigration detention centers. In May 2012, the Department of Justice (DOJ) published a comprehensive set of regulations implementing the Act. These regulations are currently in effect.

Do the PREA regulations apply to all prisons and jails?

The PREA regulations apply to prisons, jails, police lock-ups, juvenile detention centers, and community confinement facilities. The regulations apply to the federal government, states, local governments like cities and counties, and private prisons contracted with government agencies. The DOJ PREA regulations do not apply to federal immigration detention facilities or federal Health & Human

Services (HHS) facilities. These agencies were directed to promulgate their own PREA regulations.

Safety

No one has the right to force you into a sexual act. You do not have to put up with sexual harassment, sexual abuse, or being forced to have unwanted sexual contact with anyone. If you are being pushed, threatened, or blackmailed into a sex act by someone incarcerated with you, by a peer on parole, or by staff, you should report it. You should also report if anyone tries to retaliate against you because you reported such an incident or spoke to an investigator about sexual abuse.

Because of the sensitive nature of sexual abuse, people in custody always face a risk of retaliation. If you want to make a PREA complaint on someone else's behalf make sure that the incarcerated person wants you to report the abuse before you do so.

24-hour support is available for victims of sexual abuse and harassment:

- **National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800.656.4673**
- **NYS Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline: 800.942.6906**
- **In NYC: 800.621.4673**

Just Detention International (JDI) is an organization dedicated to ending sexual abuse in detention through advocacy, education, and legal measures. If you have been the victim of sexual assault and would like the JDI's Survivor Packet mailed to you, call **213.384.1400 x110**. See the full listing for JDI on [page 153](#).

Information on reporting sexual assault and harassment

If you have experienced sexual abuse, voyeurism, or sexual harassment:

- You can file a complaint by telling anyone who works at the facility, including a volunteer, trusted staff member, counselor, medical staff, or PREA Compliance Manager.
- You can tell them verbally or in writing. It's a good idea to keep a copy of any written reports.
- You do not have to tell the person who hurt you that you are reporting the abuse or report the abuse to someone you are afraid of.

- The person you tell is required to tell only those required to begin the investigation, and no one else. They are instructed to keep your complaint confidential, but make sure to tell the individual you trust most.
- You can report the abuse at any time, but the sooner you report it, the sooner it can be investigated and steps can be taken to protect you.
- You can also have someone else report the abuse for you. If you think someone else is being sexually abused or sexually harassed, you should report that too.

When you tell the facility staff about sexual abuse, they must:

- Act immediately by telling a supervisor;
- Begin to investigate promptly;
- Separate you from the person or people who hurt you;
- Let you know the results of the investigation. If the person who hurt you is punished, transferred, or fired, the facility staff must tell you.

When you tell the facility staff that you were sexually abused they cannot:

- Retaliate against you;
- Put you in solitary confinement as a punishment. The facility staff may put you in solitary based on a claim that it is for your protection, and there is paperwork that must be done to prove it. This is called protective custody.

If you have been a victim of sexual abuse:

- Staff may ask you not to shower or not to brush your teeth. They may ask you to do these things to protect evidence, but it is ultimately your choice.
- The facility may place you in protective custody (solitary).
- Medical providers will check you for injuries that you may or may not be able to see right away. They can also provide treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and collect evidence of the sexual abuse. Medical providers will also discuss the possibility of pregnancy.

Confidentiality:

- All records of reports of sexual abuse are confidential under Civil Rights Law § 50-B. The identity of a victim of sexual abuse,

the person reporting sexual abuse, any witnesses, and the facts of the report itself are confidential. Information is only shared with the people involved in the reporting, investigation, discipline, and treatment process, or as otherwise required by law.

Prosecution for a false report:

- Law enforcement may charge a person with making a false report if, after investigation, it is proven that the person made the statement knowing it was false or baseless, or the person reported an alleged crime or incident knowing it did not occur. A report made in good faith is not falsely reporting an incident or lying, even if the investigation does not substantiate the allegation.

The following pages list where to report sexual assault and harassment. The investigative agencies listed respond to reports from people incarcerated in state (DOCCS), city (DOC), juvenile (OCFS), federal (BOP), and immigration (ICE) facilities.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION (DOCCS)



<https://doccs.ny.gov/prea>

To report sexual assault or harassment directly to DOCCS:

Office of Special Investigations—Intake Unit
NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
The Harriman State Office Campus
1220 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12226
Telephone: 844.674.4697

<https://doccs.ny.gov/doccs-office-special-investigations-osi>

The DOCCS Office of Special Investigations is an internal unit whose mandate is to investigate allegations of criminal activity related to DOCCS and any other wrongdoing within DOCCS. Contact to file a complaint about physical or sexual abuse, drug trafficking, contraband possession, staff misconduct and corruption, and suspected terrorist activities committed by anyone at DOCCS facilities. Provide details about the incident including who

was involved, the time and place of the incident, the identity of any victim, and the names of any witnesses.

To report sexual assault or harassment to an outside agency:

NYS Commission of Correction

Alfred E. Smith State Office Building

80 South Swan Street, 12th Floor, Albany, NY 12210

Telephone: 518.485.2346

<https://scoc.ny.gov>

Acts as the regulatory oversight agency of New York State DOCCS. Investigates state prisons, county jails, and police lock-ups. All complaints and grievances must be sent via mail so that there is written documentation.

Office of the State Inspector General

Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 2, 16th Floor, Albany, NY 12223

Telephone: 800.367.4448

<https://ig.ny.gov>

The Office of the State Inspector General has the responsibility to detect, investigate, deter, and eliminate abuse and misconduct by NYS employees.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION (DOC)



www.nyc.gov/site/doc/directives/directives.page

Call 311 from any NYC DOC facility.

City of New York

Department of Investigation—Complaint Bureau

180 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.825.5900

www.nyc.gov/site/doi/contact/contact-doi.page

NYC Board of Correction

2 Lafayette, Suite 1221, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.669.7900

www.nyc.gov/site/boc/about/how-to-make-a-complaint.page

**NYS OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
(OCFS)—JUVENILE FACILITIES**



<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/rehab/prea.php>

**New York State Justice Center
161 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054
Hotline: 855.373.2122**

www.justicecenter.ny.gov/incident-reporting

Contact the New York State Justice Center with a suspected occurrence of abuse in an OCFS residential juvenile justice facility. All reports of potential sexual, physical, or verbal abuse of any kind will be investigated by the Justice Center.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS (BOP)



www.bop.gov/inmates/custody_and_care/sexual_abuse_prevention.jsp

To report sexual abuse by someone incarcerated:

**Federal Bureau of Prisons
National PREA Coordinator
Reentry Services Division
400 1st Street NW, Room 4027, Washington, DC 20534**

To report sexual abuse by BOP staff:

**Federal Bureau of Prisons
Office of Internal Affairs
320 1st Street NW, Room 600, Washington, DC 20534**

To initiate an investigation, provide information about the incident(s) including the dates, times, and locations where each incident took place and the names and identifying information of the person(s) involved. Any details provided assists with the investigation.

Report to an outside party by calling the **National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800.656.4673.**

US IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE)



www.ice.gov/detain/prea

To report sexual assault or harassment directly to DHS:

ICE Office of Professional Responsibility
Telephone: 833.442.3677

ICE Detention Reporting and Information Line
Telephone: 888.351.4024

DHS Office of Inspector General/MAIL STOP 0305
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane SW, Washington, DC 20528
Telephone: 800.323.8603

To report sexual assault or harassment to an outside agency:

Write to the Consular Official from your home country who is assigned to the United States.

Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800.656.4673.

Call the National Immigration Detention Hotline from inside detention: 9233#.

When you report a sexual abuse or assault incident, the facility and/or an appropriate law enforcement agency will conduct an investigation. You may be asked to participate in an interview to gather information. ICE will inform you of the result of any investigation once it is completed. There is a difference between reporting the incident and choosing to press charges. You may choose not to immediately press charges, but you can always decide to do so later. If criminal charges are filed, they will be presented for possible prosecution. It is important for you to discuss any concerns you have with the prosecutor (or your attorney) or a victim advocate.

You do not have to give your name to report sexual abuse or assault. You can choose to report anonymously. It is illegal for any report of sexual abuse or fear of being abused or assaulted to

negatively affect your immigration case. The law states that no one can retaliate against you in any way for reporting sexual abuse or assault.

The Department of Homeland Security finalized regulations implementing PREA in 2014. Even with those regulations in place, DHS PREA standards do not protect immigrants in all detention facilities. The regulations are enforced in facilities that have contracts with DHS that are new, renewed, or modified since 2014.

Immigrants

I THINK THE NOTION OF DREAMING IN A TIME WHERE WE ARE TOLD THAT IT IS FOOLISH, FUTILE OR NOT USEFUL IS ONE OF THE MOST REVOLUTIONARY THINGS WE CAN DO.

— HARSHA WALIA



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY C.J. SEIGNIOUS

IMPORTANT: The information included in the following sections were written before the presidential administration changed. Immigration laws and policies change frequently. It is important to stay up to date with these changes and to understand your rights.

Immigration Law & Enforcement

Speak to a lawyer or contact one of the organizations listed in this chapter to find legal support and advice. A criminal court case can have immigration consequences. Talk to your defense lawyer about your immigration status and history. The information you tell your lawyer is confidential, and they have a responsibility to attempt to minimize immigration consequences and advise you about them.

The New York Police Department (NYPD) and the NYC Department of Correction (DOC) are not supposed to cooperate with ICE in transferring people from criminal to immigration custody or notify ICE of their release from criminal custody, with very few exceptions. However, fingerprints taken by the NYPD at the time of arrest are automatically shared with ICE, which can put someone at risk of enforcement in their home and community.

Law enforcement agencies, including ICE, use social media and digital technologies to surveil people. As surveillance technology continues to grow it is important to be aware of its impact on immigration enforcement. Visit <https://notechforice.com/resources> for reports such as, *Who's Behind ICE? The Tech Companies Fueling Deportations* and *ICE Digital Prisons: The Expansion of Mass Surveillance as ICE's Alternative to Detention*, to learn more. For more information about digital policing and resources for online privacy, including information about cell phone location data, see [page 192](#).

Who is at Risk From ICE

The federal government can deport certain immigrants including:

- Anyone without lawful immigration status.
- People with status (e.g., lawful permanent residents, refugees, and visa holders) who have certain criminal convictions.

ICE prioritizes certain cases including:

- People who ICE claims pose a “threat to national security.”
- People who unlawfully entered the US on or after November 1, 2020.
- People who ICE claims pose a “current threat to public safety.” ICE will consider factors such as a person’s recent criminal cases and arrests by the police, and any charges involving firearms or weapons.
- **Note:** These priorities are from before the change of presidential administrations and will most likely change. Even if you believe you do not fall into the priorities, ICE could still decide to arrest you if you are vulnerable to deportation.

You could still be a target even if

- Your conviction is from years ago.
- You didn’t serve time in jail or prison.
- Your case was minor or a misdemeanor.
- You’ve been a lawful permanent resident for a long time.
- All the other members of your family are US citizens.

Common ICE tactics

- ICE agents may pose as police officers and misrepresent themselves to get consent to enter your home. They might say they want to talk to you about identity theft or an ongoing police investigation.
- They might be wearing plain clothes, or they might wear a vest with the words “POLICE ICE” written on the back.
- ICE agents might present a document that says “warrant,” but that may not be a valid warrant signed by a judge. Learn to recognize the difference. A valid warrant will have the name of a state or federal court at the top and will have a judge’s

signature at the bottom. It will also list your address or name a person who lives at your address.

- Visit www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/ice-ruses for more information on tactics ICE agents use.



Know Your Rights

All immigrants, regardless of immigration status, have rights under the constitution. It is important to learn about these rights and how to best prepare for an encounter with immigration enforcement. The following is not intended as legal advice. Find more information and resources about your rights, online at www.immigrantdefenseproject.org, www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights, and www.informedimmigrant.com.

To report ICE raids in New York City, call the **Immigrant Defense Project** at **212.725.6422**.

In any interaction with ICE agents, whether in public, at your home, or in a courthouse, you have the right to remain silent. This means you do not have to answer questions about your immigration status, your country of origin, where you were born, or any questions ICE might have about a person they are looking for. You can affirm this right by saying “I am choosing to remain silent.”

To reduce risk to yourself, do not lie about your status, and do not run, argue, or physically resist. Do not carry any documents from your country of origin or any false documents. (More information on how to obtain a free NYC ID card is on [page 226](#).)

If you are asked about your immigration status by law enforcement

- Remain silent. Do not say anything except “I am choosing to remain silent.”
- Do not answer questions about where you were born, whether you are a US citizen, or how you entered the country. (Separate rules apply at international borders and airports and for individuals on certain nonimmigrant visas, including tourists and business travelers.)
- If you are not a US citizen and you have valid immigration

papers, you should show them if an immigration agent requests to see them.

- Do not lie or provide fake documents and do not give any foreign documents.

If you are approached by ICE in public places

- Try to stay calm and use your right to remain silent. Do not answer any questions about your immigration status or where you were born.
- Ask “Am I free to go?” If they say “Yes,” calmly walk away.
- If the officers answer “No,” you are now being detained. Do not run away.
- If ICE arrests you, ask to speak to a lawyer and affirm your right to remain silent.
- You have the right to refuse a search. If ICE starts to search inside your pockets or belongings, say “I do not consent to a search.”
- If ICE arrests you when you are in criminal court for a court date, ask to speak to your defense lawyer before they take you away.

If ICE comes to your home

- Do not open the door.
- ICE is only allowed to enter if they have a valid judicial search warrant or arrest warrant with your correct name and/or address, signed by a judge.
- A warrant is only valid if it is signed by a judge (not an immigration official), it has the address of the home to be searched, and it describes the area to be searched.
- Ask them to slip the warrant under the door for you to look at. If they give you a warrant of removal/deportation, you do not have to let them inside.

If ICE has a valid warrant or enters your home without permission

- Call a lawyer right away.
- Remain silent. Do not say anything except “I have the right to remain silent.”
- Do not sign any papers. You do not have to sign anything without your lawyer there.
- Record or note all the details of the incident including badge numbers, agency, and full names. If you are using a phone or

camera and are asked to stop, do so to reduce risk to yourself, and try to remember everything to write down immediately after.

If ICE arrests or detains you

- Remain silent. Anything you say can be used against you in court.
- You have the right to a lawyer, but the government will not provide one. Call the **New Americans Hotline** at **800.566.7636** to find options for legal counsel. Many other organizations listed in this chapter also provide access to legal services.
- You have the right to contact your consulate or have an officer inform the consulate of your arrest.
- Do not discuss your immigration status with anyone but your lawyer.
- Do not sign anything, such as a voluntary departure document or stipulated removal document, without talking to a lawyer. If you sign, you may be giving up your opportunity to try to stay in the US.
- Memorize your immigration number (“A” number) and give it to your family. It will help them locate you.

If you feel your rights have been violated

- Write down everything you remember, including the officer’s badge and patrol car numbers, which agency the officers were from, and any other details. Get contact information from any witnesses. If you are injured, seek medical attention immediately and take photographs of your injuries.
- Contact an Immigrant Rights organization with the information you have recorded.
- File a complaint about ICE employee misconduct with the **ICE Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR)** online at www.ice.gov/about-ice/opr or call **833.442.3677**.

Locating a loved one who has been detained

- Use the USCIS Online Detainee Locator System to find a person currently in ICE custody, or who was released from ICE custody for any reason within the last 60 days at <https://locator.ice.gov/odls>.

Immigration fraud warning

- Beware of Notario Público Fraud. In many Spanish speaking

countries, a Notario Público is an attorney. In the United States, they are not (although attorneys may offer Notary Public services). Notaries Public may certify your identity and signatures (and charge a small fee), but they may not represent you before USCIS, in immigration court, or give you legal advice.

- **Documented** has a collection of articles with resources on the topic of fraud and misinformation, available online at <https://documentedny.com/category/english/immigration-fraud>.
- If you are a victim of immigration fraud, call the **New Americans Hotline** at **800.566.7636**.

Emergency Planning

For those facing possible deportation or detention due to immigration status, it is important to have an emergency plan. The **Immigrant Defense Project** provides resources at www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/emergency-preparedness, including a short resource that explains how the families and friends of detained immigrants can help advocate for the release of a loved one on bond called, *Freedom Together: Supporting your loved one in their immigration bond hearing*.

Some steps that can be taken

- Carry a Know Your Rights card to show to ICE if they stop you.
- Organize important documents including all personal, immigration, and criminal court documents. Create copies and keep these documents safe. Do not give them to ICE.
- Meet with a lawyer as soon as possible to see if you qualify for any legal defenses against deportation (“relief”).
- Plan for medical needs. Write down and carry important medical information with you, including contact information for your doctors and the name and dosage of medications you take.
- Memorize important phone numbers including family members and an immigration/criminal attorney.
- Make arrangements for your children or other loved ones. **The Immigrant Legal Resource Center** provides an information packet for families to create a **Family Preparedness Plan** found at www.ilrc.org/step-step-family-preparedness-plan.

Asylum Seekers

The **New York City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs** has information for asylum seekers about the **Arrival Center** and the **Asylum Seeker Resource Navigation Centers**, at www.nyc.gov/site/asylumseekers/resources/additional-resources.page. For the most up-to-date information, call the hotline at **212.788.7654** Mon–Fri 9–5.

At the time of creating this publication, newly arrived people and families living in Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Centers (HERRCs) and Respite Centers are being given 30-day and 60-day notices to vacate. If shelter has not been found within the time frame, they need to return to the Arrival Center for another placement.

The Legal Aid Society has more information for individuals who are newly arrived from a different country available at <https://legalaidnyc.org/get-help/housing-problems/what-you-need-to-know-about-shelter-if-youre-a-new-arrival-to-new-york-city>, which includes more information on the 30-day notices and 60-day notices to single adults and adult families living in HERRCs and Respite Centers, accommodations for people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ accommodations, religious accommodations, and more. People can also call the **Homeless Rights Helpline** at **800.649.9125** Mon–Fri 10–3.

Documented created a Guide to NYC for Asylum Seekers, available in Spanish at nuevosinmigrantes.nyc and in English at newimmigrants.nyc. The guide has information on accessing shelter, food, free legal help, language classes, and more.

Organizations

Due to the number of people needing services, some organizations have paused their intake. It is advised that people call the **NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs hotline** at **212.788.7654** (Mon–Fri 9–5) or for legal help **800.354.0365** (Mon–Fri 9–6).

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—SERVICES FOR IMMIGRANTS

Telephone: 917.275.6975

www.nypl.org/immigrants

Offers a series of free programs and services related to work and life skills development through local partnerships and volunteers for people of all ages. Offers free English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes. The New Americans Corners (NAC) program provides materials to check out and informational resources on citizenship and other immigration-related topics. Please call or email coe@nypl.org for more information about programs and requirements.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—IMMIGRANT SERVICES

10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238

www.bklynlibrary.org/learn/immigrants

Offers free in-person and virtual citizenship classes; for more information email immigrantservices@bklynlibrary.org. Offers programs in multiple languages including English conversation groups, family cultural events, free citizenship classes, and adult literacy courses. Language Line is a free language interpretation service via telephone and is available in over 200 languages at all 60 BPL locations and telephone reference lines. Free immigration legal assistance is provided by ActionNYC. Full confidential screenings are provided to determine eligibility for immigration benefits, Green Card applications and renewals, Temporary Protected Status (TPS), Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) renewals, naturalization, and referrals to other community-based resources and support services.

QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—NEW AMERICANS PROGRAM

ES

89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432

Telephone: 718.990.0894

www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/new-americans

Offers free workshops in the most widely spoken immigrant languages of Queens. Informational workshops related to new immigrants' acculturation are offered on topics such as citizenship, job training, advice on helping children learn, starting a business, health, and social services. Also provides free readings, concerts, and workshops celebrating the literary, performing, and folk arts of immigrants from Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Offers referrals for immigration cases. For more information visit the website or email napref@queenslibrary.org.

US CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES—GREEN CARDS

ES

Telephone: 800.375.5283 / TTY: 800.767.1833

Outside the United States or a US territory: 212.620.3418

www.uscis.gov/green-card

The website provides information on Green Cards including eligibility, how to renew or replace, steps on how to apply, what happens after applying, forms and fees, and more. Call for more information and a mailing address.

NYS OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS (ONA)

ES

New Americans Hotline: 800.566.7636

<https://dos.ny.gov/office-new-americans>

Provides information on ESOL classes, naturalization and DACA assistance, federal immigration law and policy information and referrals, and business development training in centers throughout NYS. Call the hotline for general questions about immigration and

naturalization, referrals, and locations. Available in multiple languages.

NYC MAYOR’S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS— IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES

Hotline: 800.354.0365 or 311 and say “Immigration Legal” (Mon–Fri 9–6)

www.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/legal-resources/immigration-legal-services.page

Offers free, safe immigration legal help in a network of trusted community organizations and schools. Provides legal screenings to find out if you qualify for any immigration benefit and legal help from an experienced attorney or accredited representative for a range of cases, including citizenship, Green Card applications and renewals, DACA, Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and more. An appointment is needed to receive services. Help is available in over 200 languages. The website also provides additional resources including Know Your Rights information, tips for avoiding fraud, information for immigrant caregivers, and more.

BRONXWORKS—IMMIGRATION SERVICES

Offers free help with preparing and submitting applications for various benefits to US Citizenship and Immigration Services. Also assists with completing waivers for fees associated with some immigration applications. Additionally, offers services for immigrants including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes and citizenship classes.

See the full listing for BronxWorks on [page 368](#).

BROOKLYN DEFENDER SERVICES (BDS)—IMMIGRATION PRACTICE

Provides free legal representation to those at the intersection of the criminal legal system and the immigration system and those

who are detained in immigration jail with pending cases in NYC. For questions regarding individuals who are currently in ICE detention call **718.564.6290**.

See the full listing for BDS on [page 199](#).

CABRINI IMMIGRANT SERVICES OF NYC

701 Fort Washington Avenue, New York, NY 10040

Telephone: 212.791.4590 x100

<https://cis-nyc.org>

A faith-based agency that provides a broad range of services to immigrants and their families. Direct legal services include Green Card renewals, family-based petitions, DACA renewals, FOIA requests, and citizenship applications. Also provides legal referrals for refugees and asylees, case management and short-term crisis intervention counseling, programming for students and families, a weekly food pantry (contact for operating hours), referrals to community resources, advocacy, and online Know Your Rights workshops.

CAMBA—IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES

20 Snyder Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226

Telephone: 718.940.6311

Provides legal advice, application assistance, and representation to individuals and families. Call to schedule an appointment. Very limited appointment availability.

See the full listing for CAMBA on [page 117](#).

CATHOLIC CHARITIES—IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE SERVICES

1011 1st Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10022

Helpline: 888.744.7900

<https://catholiccharitiesny.org/what-we-do/immigrants-and-refugees>

Offers information and referrals as well as direct service for immigration-related problems. Provides legal consultations, representation, and assistance to documented and undocumented immigrants.

CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL

45 Suffolk Street, New York, NY 10002

Telephone: 212.941.0920

www.cpc-nyc.org

Provides culturally sensitive programs for immigrants and low-income New Yorkers of all ages. Offers free ESOL classes, job training, programs for children and youth, programs for seniors, and more.

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)—CITIZENSHIP NOW!

Telephone: 646.664.9400 or 212.652.2071

www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/communications-marketing/citizenship-now

Provides free, confidential immigration law services to individuals and families on their path to US citizenship. Attorneys and paralegals offer one-on-one consultations to assess participants' eligibility for legal benefits and assist them in applying when qualified. Available to all members of the community, both CUNY students and nonstudents. Contact for locations and to schedule an appointment.

See the full listing for CUNY on [page 60](#).

COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT FREEDOM

5030 Broadway, Suite 639, New York, NY 10034

Telephone: 212.781.0355

<https://coalitionfreedom.org>

Provides immigration services including one-on-one legal consultations and application assistance on issues such as adjustment of legal status, filing for citizenship and naturalization, and family-based petitions. ESOL and citizenship classes are offered. The Worker Center provides resources and training, including OSHA 30.

EMERALD ISLE IMMIGRATION CENTER (EIIC)

<https://eiic.org>

4235 Katonah Avenue, Bronx, NY 10470

Telephone: 718.324.3039

59-26 Woodside Avenue, Woodside, NY 11377

Telephone: 718.478.5502

Provides information on the procedures for most immigration matters such as reentry permits, lost or replacement Green Cards, family immigration visas, and more. Offers a citizenship program, by appointment, where one can obtain assistance with the application forms, as well as get the necessary photographs. Call to set up an appointment.

EMMA'S TORCH

345 Smith Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231

<https://emmastorch.org>

An 11-week paid apprenticeship program in culinary training for refugees, asylees, or survivors of human trafficking ages 18 and over, who are authorized to work in the US. Offered throughout the program are weekly English classes focused on culinary vocabulary and interview preparation, job-readiness workshops, mock inter-

views, and regular evaluations to track progress and prepare for a long-term career. Visit the website for more information including eligibility and application.

ENVISION FREEDOM FUND

81 Court Street, 6th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Hotline: 718.717.2007 (Tue and Thu 3pm–5pm)
<https://envisionfreedom.org>

Pays immigration bond to free people from ICE detention who are unable to afford it, and provides post-release support for those they bond out including food, mental health, medical, and housing support. Never charges money, fees, or asks to be paid back for services provided. Also offers a community engagement program for anyone impacted by immigration and criminal legal systems, which includes regular community meetings offering Know Your Rights and opportunities to participate in advocacy work, leadership and political education trainings, and a paid fellowship. Operates a hotline for community members in immigration detention, which includes but is not limited to providing direct support with bond referrals, commissary funds, legal referrals, book requests, and concerns about detention center conditions.

FAMILIES FOR FREEDOM (FFF)

35 West 31st Street, #1002, New York, NY 10001
Telephone: 646.290.8720 / Hotline: 646.290.5551
<https://familiesforfreedom.org>

An advocacy organization fighting to end the continued detention and deportation of anyone regardless of immigration status, providing support to families affected by criminalization and deportation. The hotline provides help to those who have a loved one who is facing deportation. Conducts education to raise awareness including Member Leadership Development (MLP), Know Your Rights, Deportation 101, and more.

FREEDOM FOR IMMIGRANTS



440 North Barranca Avenue, #6382, Covina, CA 91723

Telephone: 510.822.2722

www.freedomforimmigrants.org

National Immigration Detention Hotline

Hotline: 209.757.3733 / From Detention: 9233#

An advocacy organization fighting to end immigration detention. Operates a Direct Support Fund which provides financial support for people affected by immigration detention, and a National Detention Bond Fund to help those who cannot afford bond amounts set by ICE or by immigration judges. The National Immigration Detention Hotline is a free, confidential service available Mon–Fri 9am–11pm EST (6am–8pm PST) and for people in detention Tue–Thu 1pm–11pm EST (10am–8pm PST).

IMMIGRANT DEFENSE PROJECT



PO Box 1765, New York, NY 10027

Helpline: 212.725.6422

www.immigrantdefenseproject.org

Does not provide direct representation. Call the helpline for expert advice on issues of immigrant criminalization. Provides targeted litigation in support of challenges to deportations and other adverse immigration consequences based on criminal convictions and arrests. Also provides legal training and Know Your Rights flyers for encounters with ICE and resources for emergency planning.

IMMIGRATION ADVOCATES NETWORK (IAN)—NATIONAL IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES DIRECTORY

www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory

An online directory with options to search for immigration legal services providers by state, county, or detention facility. Only non-

profit organizations that provide free or low-cost immigration legal services are included.

IMMIGRATION EQUALITY

From Detention: 917.654.9696 (Mon–Wed 9:30–5:30, Thu 1–5:30)
<https://immigrationequality.org>

Provides free legal services to LGBTQI+ people and those living with HIV who are asylum seekers physically present in the US, and LGBTQI+ people and people living with HIV in immigration detention facilities. Advocates for queer and trans asylum seekers in the courts, and same-sex married couples whose children are unlawfully denied recognition of their US citizenship. The legal help contact form is available on the website.

INFORMED IMMIGRANT

www.informedimmigrant.com

A website that provides guides for undocumented immigrants on rights, family preparedness, help for people in detention or facing deportation, a directory to find free or low-cost legal services by zip code, and more. Also provides resources for service providers and schools.

LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Assists low-income immigrants in obtaining lawful status, applying for citizenship, and defending against deportation.

Individuals detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) may be eligible for representation through the New York Immigrant Family Unit Project (NYIFUP) if the Immigration Court case is in NYC or, if they are a NYC resident, and the case is in New Jersey. For more information email nyifup@legal-aid.org.

See the full listing for Legal Aid Society on [page 203](#).

MAKE THE ROAD NEW YORK

<https://maketheroadny.org>

301 Grove Street, Brooklyn, NY 11237

Telephone: 718.418.7690

92-10 Roosevelt Avenue, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

Telephone: 718.565.8500

161 Port Richmond Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10302

Telephone: 718.727.1222

Provides a range of legal, social, and education services. Legal services include advice and representation on immigration cases, including citizenship, asylum, and deportation defense. Also advocates for worker and tenant rights, providing legal help against workplace exploitation and wage theft, evictions, and unsafe housing conditions. Provides legal support and advocacy to transgender, gender nonconforming, intersex, and queer (TGNCIQ) immigrants and workers.

IMMIGRANTS

Assists with benefits applications, health insurance and food stamp enrollment, navigating the health system, and negotiating hospital bills. Provides emergency food services and free wellness programs.

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Offers programs for youth, including TGNCIQ youth, as well as a range of adult education and programs including ESOL and citizenship test classes, bilingual health and safety trainings for workers, and a Community Health Worker Training that provides students with skills and job placement assistance. Provides leadership training to people interested in advocating for change in their communities.

MERCY CENTER—IMMIGRATION SERVICES

<https://mercycenterbronx.org>

332 East 149th Street, 8th Floor, Bronx, NY 10451

Telephone: 718.942.9815

377 East 145th Street, Bronx, NY 10454

Telephone: 718.993.2789

Offers free legal assistance with naturalization applications for legal permanent residents, DACA renewals, and Green Card renewals. Makes referrals to partner organizations for other legal immigration matters. Also offers adult education programs such as ESOL classes and workforce development courses.

MIXTECA ORGANIZATION INC.

245 23rd Street, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11215

Telephone: 718.965.4795

www.mixteca.org

Provides a range of services to Spanish speaking immigrants in NYC. Offers ESOL classes, computer classes, and adult basic education and literacy classes in Spanish. Also provides free health screenings and workshops, mental health services, domestic violence support services, Know Your Rights workshops, youth programming, and referrals to free and low-cost immigration, legal, and social services.

THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL—THE CITIZENSHIP PROJECT



170 Central Park West, New York, NY 10024

Telephone: 212.873.3400 x511

www.nyhistory.org/citizenship-project

Offers citizenship courses to prepare permanent residents for the civics test portion of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) naturalization interview. Citizenship classes are taught in English and are accessible to English Language Learners. Spanish citizenship classes are offered to people who qualify for the English language exemption. Classes are offered in person and online. Must register in advance.

NEW WOMEN NEW YORKERS (NWNY)

www.nywomenimmigrants.org

Provides free workforce development programs to immigrant women in NYC. LEAD, We Speak We LEAD, and Bridge to LEAD begin with an interactive job-readiness workshop series providing critical knowledge and skills for the US job search process, complemented by company sessions (mock interviews, field visits, career advice coffee chats, etc.), and individual support in the form of resume building, interview prep, and career counseling. Also offers free community and storytelling programs.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW (OBT)



Provides free services to the immigrant community of Bushwick and the surrounding area. Services include preparation classes for citizenship exams and ESOL classes.

See the full listing for OBT on [page 380](#).

SAFE PASSAGE PROJECT

185 West Broadway, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 212.324.6558

www.safepassageproject.org

Offers help with the legal needs of indigent immigrant youth living in NYC. Provides representation for unaccompanied minors in immigration court and resources for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), asylum, as well as other possible immigration alternatives for children. The social work team assists with additional mental health and school-related support services. Call for an appointment, screening, or interview, as well as updated information on services.

TEAM TLC NYC

www.ttlcnyc.org

The Little Shop of Kindness

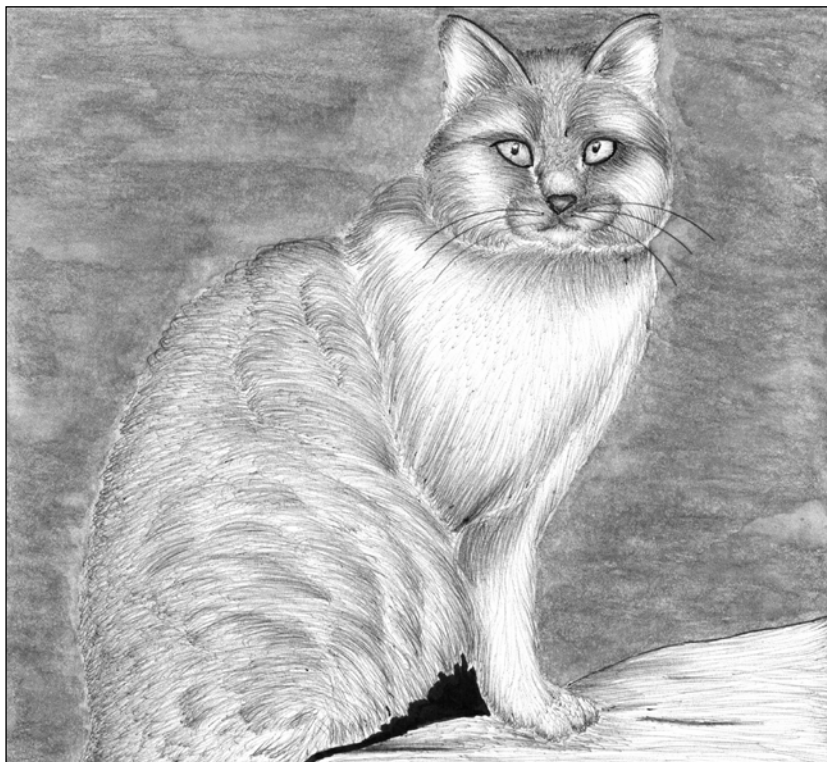
1745 1st Avenue, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10128

Provides assistance to asylum seekers in NYC. The Little Shop of Kindness is a free shop for recently arrived (less than 18 months) immigrants providing free clothing and supplies, and referrals to other resources and services. Appointments are required, and can be made online at <https://bit.ly/SHOPTLCNYC>. Also provides legal services including consultations about immigration status, and change of address and change of venue filings, as well as pro se (self-representation) clinics on asylum, Temporary Protected Status, and work authorization filings. Visit the website for more information and sign-up.

Veterans

YOU CAN CAGE THE SINGER BUT NOT THE SONG.

— HARRY BELAFONTE



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY GABRIEL OLIVARES

Veteran Benefits & Incarceration

The US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) can pay certain benefits to veterans who are incarcerated in a federal, state, or local penal institution; however, the amount paid depends on the type of benefit and reason for incarceration. For more information, visit www.benefits.va.gov/persona/veteran-incarcerated.asp. It is important to speak directly with a VA representative to figure out what specifically applies to your situation.

Disability compensation

Payments are reduced if a veteran is convicted of a felony and imprisoned for more than 60 days. The VA makes determinations about the severity of a disability based on the evidence submitted as part of a claim and rates disability from 0% to 100%, in 10% increments. Veterans rated 20% or more are limited to the 10% disability rate. For a veteran whose disability rating is 10%, the payment is reduced by one-half. Once a veteran is released from prison, compensation payments may be reinstated based upon the severity of the service connected disability(ies) at that time. Payments are not reduced for recipients participating in work release programs, residing in halfway houses (also known as “residential reentry centers”), or under community supervision. The amount of any increased compensation awarded to an incarcerated veteran that results from other than a statutory rate increase may be subject to reduction due to incarceration. Compensation benefits are not reduced if incarcerated for a misdemeanor.

Pension

If you are incarcerated as the result of a conviction of a felony or misdemeanor, your pension payment will be discontinued effective on the 61st day of imprisonment following conviction. Payments may be resumed upon release from prison if the Veteran meets VA eligibility requirements. Failure to notify the VA of a veteran’s incarceration could result in the loss of all financial benefits until the overpayment is recovered.

Education benefits

Beneficiaries incarcerated for charges other than a felony can receive full monthly benefits if otherwise entitled. Those convicted

of felonies residing in halfway houses, or participating in work-release programs also can receive full monthly benefits. Claimants incarcerated for a felony conviction can be paid only the costs of tuition, fees, necessary books, equipment, and supplies.

Apportionment to spouse or children

All or part of the compensation not paid to an incarcerated veteran may be apportioned to the veteran’s spouse, child or children, and dependent parents on the basis of individual need. An apportionment of an incarcerated veteran’s VA benefits is not granted automatically to the veteran’s dependents. The dependent(s) must file a claim for an apportionment.

Are you eligible for VA medical care while incarcerated?

Incarcerated veterans do not forfeit their eligibility for medical care; however, current regulations restrict the VA from providing hospital and outpatient care to a currently incarcerated veteran. The VA may provide care once the veteran has been unconditionally released from the penal institution.

When will VA benefits be resumed?

Veterans may inform the VA to have their benefits resumed within 30 days or less of their anticipated release date based on evidence from a parole board or other official prison source showing the veteran’s scheduled release date. Your award for compensation or pension benefits shall be resumed the date of release from incarceration if the VA receives notice of release within one year following release. Depending on the type of disability, the VA may schedule you for a medical examination to see if your disability has improved. You will need to visit or call your local VA regional office for assistance. You are considered to have been released from incarceration if you are paroled or participating in a work-release or halfway housing program.

STATESIDE LEGAL

www.statesidelegal.org

A website for veterans, service members, and the general public looking to understand the complex systems of laws and benefits

unique to those with military service. Provides legal information and resources important to the rights and benefits of individuals with military service, as well as their families and caregivers; hosts a national directory of free- and low-cost service providers, state agencies, law school clinics, and other resources on legal rights and benefits.

Organizations

US DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)



VA Regional Benefits Office

245 West Houston Street, New York, NY 10014

Information Line: 800.698.2411 / TTY: 711

National Call Center for Homeless Veterans: 877.424.3838

www.va.gov

Provides near-comprehensive healthcare services to eligible military veterans at VA medical centers and outpatient clinics located throughout the country, along with several non-healthcare benefits including disability compensation, vocational rehabilitation, education assistance, home loans, and life insurance. Contact for more information, forms, how to request military records (including DD214), and instructions for applying for benefits.

The Healthcare for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) program provides services including outreach and pre-release assessment services and referrals and linkages to medical, mental health, and social services, including employment services on release and short-term case management assistance on release.

The Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) program for court-involved and incarcerated people provides help with access to Veterans Health Administration (VHA) services, as clinically indicated. Specialists provide direct outreach, assessment and case management for court-involved veterans in local courts and jails, and liaison with local criminal legal system partners. Does not offer legal services.

Homeless Outreach Coordinators assist court-involved veterans to learn more about benefits and qualifications, applying for benefits, and referrals to other organizations and resources. Call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans to be connected with a Homeless Coordinator in your area.

Local Veterans Centers, listed below, have therapists and clinicians that provide a broad range of counseling and referral services to eligible veterans and their families. Provides counseling for combat-related trauma, counseling for those who have been sexually traumatized in the military, and bereavement counseling. Eligibility determined upon intake by one's DD214. Call for services provided and to schedule an appointment.

2471 Morris Avenue, Suite 1A, Bronx, NY 10468
Telephone: 718.367.3500

25 Chapel Street, Suite 604, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.630.2830

519 8th Avenue, Suite 2401, New York, NY 10018
Telephone: 212.951.6866

5005 Metropolitan Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
Telephone: 718.296.2871

60 Bay Street, 1st Floor, Staten Island, NY 10301
Telephone: 718.816.4499

JAMES J. PETERS VA MEDICAL CENTER

130 West Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468
Telephone: 718.584.9000 / VA Health Connect: 800.877.6976
www.bronx.va.gov

Provides comprehensive healthcare including primary and long-term care in areas of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics, cardiology, orthopedics, infectious diseases, radiology, specialty clinics, rheumatology, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord

injury, kidney transplant, and extended care. The helpline provides assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

NYS DIVISION OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Hotline: 888.838.7697

<https://veterans.ny.gov>

Provides assistance to veterans and their families with any matters related to veterans' benefits including help with obtaining a copy of one's DD214. Call or visit the website to schedule an appointment.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES

1 Centre Street, 22nd Floor, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.416.5250 or 311

www.nyc.gov/vets

Informs and assists NYC veterans and their families including help with benefits, employment and entrepreneurship, housing support, physical and mental health, and education. Call or visit the website to connect to services.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES— PRIORITY1

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/sbs/careers/veteran-services.page

Offers intensive career services and job-placement opportunities to veterans and their spouses at all Workforce1 Career Centers in NYC. At certain locations, clients can meet with a Veteran Specialist for one-on-one advisement sessions. Call or visit the website for locations and more information.

**AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION
(AILA)—MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MAP)**

<https://www.aila.org/library/military-assistance-program>

Provides free immigration legal services to active-duty service members or recent veterans, and their family members, whose legal matters may be complex and require the knowledge of experienced immigration attorneys. Visit the website for full requirements and to request assistance.

BLACK VETERANS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (BVSJ) 




665 Willoughby Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11206

Telephone: 718.852.6004

www.bvsj.org

Assists veterans and their families in areas including housing, employment, VA benefits, social readjustment, upgrading discharges, and more. Makes referrals to shelters. Must have DD214 military discharge papers. Can assist veterans in acquiring documentation.

**CITY BAR JUSTICE CENTER—VETERANS ASSISTANCE
PROJECT** 

42 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212.382.4722

www.citybarjusticecenter.org

Provides veterans and their survivors facing systemic barriers in NYC with pro bono legal assistance on issues related to their claims for benefits from the VA. Veterans and their survivors may call to have their cases screened and, as appropriate, invited to a monthly legal clinic. At the legal clinic, volunteer lawyers assess possible legal remedies and help veterans and their survivors file claims and appeals with the VA. Assistance ranges from locating

service documents and medical records, to preparing and filing claims, including initial claims, appeals, waivers of overpayments, and discharge upgrades, and directly representing veterans at hearings.

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)—OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (COVA)

555 West 57th Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10019

Telephone: 646.664.8802

www.cuny.edu/about/university-resources/veterans-affairs

Provides support for veterans and reservists on CUNY campuses. Offers information about benefits, entitlements, counseling, and advocacy resources to assist veterans in pursuing academic and civilian careers.

See the full listing for CUNY on [page 60](#).

NYU LANGONE MEDICAL CENTER—THE STEVEN A. COHEN MILITARY FAMILY CENTER

Telephone: 855.698.4677

<https://nyulangone.org/care-services/steven-a-cohen-military-family-center>

Provides free therapy for service members and their families who are experiencing the lasting effects of all phases of military service and other life stressors, including post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, depression, anxiety, alcohol and substance use disorder, grief and loss, relationship and family conflict, military sexual trauma, readjustment issues, ADHD, parenting concerns, children's behavioral or academic problems, relationship difficulties, school problems, unemployment, and relocation issues. Telehealth services are available. Call to make an appointment.

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA (PVA)

1875 Eye Street NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20006

National Headquarters: 800.424.8200

Benefits Helpline: 866.734.0857

Women Veterans Hotline: 855.829.6636

Caregiver Support: 855.260.3274

<https://pva.org>

An advocacy and support organization for veterans who have experienced spinal cord injury or dysfunction. Provides resources and professional, medical, and legal services to disabled veterans, their caregivers, and their families, including employment support, vocational rehabilitation, help with veteran benefits, entitlements or claims, healthcare, and caregiver support.

PROTECT OUR DEFENDERS

www.protectourdefenders.com/rights

A national human rights organization dedicated to ending sexual violence, victim retaliation, misogyny, and racism in the military. The website provides Know Your Rights and fact sheets, along with a support page with local services. The Legal Services Program provides pro bono legal representation or referrals to service members and civilians who were sexually harassed or sexually assaulted by a member of the US military, were retaliated against for reporting, and/or are a whistleblower. The application is available online.

SERVICES FOR THE UNDERSERVED (S:US)—VETERAN SERVICES

Provides case management, education and employment services, and referrals to assist with reintegration. Supportive services are available for veteran families.

See the full listing for S:US on [page 152](#).

VETERANS CRISIS LINE

Hotline: 988 (press 1)

www.veteranscrisisline.net

Connects veterans in crisis, and their families and friends, with qualified VA responders through a toll-free hotline. Online chat and texting are also available. Support is offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Be aware that according to policy, when a counselor feels a caller might be at “imminent risk” of harming themselves, emergency services, which may be the police, will be called, and can result in involuntary psychiatric detention.

People with Disabilities

DISABLED PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED, WHETHER THE WORD DISABILITY IS USED OR NOT. TO ME, DISABILITY IS NOT A MONOLITH, NOR IS IT A CLEAR-CUT BINARY OF DISABLED AND NONDISABLED. DISABILITY IS MUTABLE AND EVER-EVOLVING. DISABILITY IS BOTH APPARENT AND NONAPPARENT. DISABILITY IS PAIN, STRUGGLE, BRILLIANCE, ABUNDANCE, AND JOY.

— ALICE WONG

NEW YORK RELAY CENTER 

Telephone: 711

<https://nyrelay.com>

Provides services that enable people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, or those with a speech disability to place and receive phone calls. Relay calls can be made to anyone, anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Relay operators are specially trained to facilitate calls. All calls are completely confidential.

Rights While Incarcerated

The following is from the ADA National Network’s fact sheet found online at <https://adata.org/factsheet/corrections>.

The Department of Justice issued revised Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II regulations which took effect March 15, 2011. These regulations require adult and juvenile jails and prisons (including private prisons) to make accessible benefits, services, programs, and activities to any incarcerated person with a disability. The law requires that qualified people with disabilities should have access to all programs to which they would otherwise be entitled, including educational, vocational, work release, employment, and religious programs, whether mandatory or voluntary.

People with disabilities must be housed in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the individuals. This means there needs to be accessible housing in all security classifications and/or program levels of a facility. Unless it is appropriate to make an exception, jails and prisons shall not place people with disabilities:

- In inappropriate security classifications because no accessible cells or beds are available
- In medical areas, unless they are actually receiving medical care or treatment
- In facilities that do not offer the same programs as facilities where they otherwise would be housed

- In distant facilities where they would otherwise not be housed that would deprive them of visitation with family members

Facilities should provide accessible mobility features to cells such as an accessible route to and through the room, an entry door with adequate clear width, maneuvering clearance, and accessible hardware. Altered cells with mobility features shall be provided in each classification level.

People should have equal physical access to areas used for visitation, dining, recreation, educational programs, medical services, work programs, religious services, and other offered programs. If it is technically infeasible to house someone in an area that meets these standards, a transfer within the same prison system must be provided.

If your rights have been violated, see [page 229](#) for information on filing a grievance.

ADA NATIONAL NETWORK—NORTHEAST ADA CENTER



**Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability, Cornell University,
ILR School, 201 Dolgen Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853**

Telephone: 800.949.4232

www.northeastada.org

The regional ADA center that serves NYS as well as NJ, PR, and the USVI. Provides information, training, and guidance on the Americans with Disabilities Act. Call or email northeastada@cornell.edu for more information.

DISABILITY RIGHTS NEW YORK

New York City Office:

25 Chapel Street, Suite 1005, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 518.432.7861/ Toll-free: 800.993.8982

www.drny.org

Mailing Address: 279 Troy Road, Suite 9 #236, Rensselaer, NY 12144

Provides free legal and advocacy services to individuals with disabilities. Assistance is limited to disability-related matters within agency resources.

Organizations

JBI INTERNATIONAL 

110 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016
Telephone: 212.889.2525 or 800.433.1531
www.jbilibrary.org

Provides Jewish-interest and other reading materials for people who are blind, visually impaired, or have a reading disability or a physical disability that makes it difficult to read a book or standard print. Audio books are available in multiple languages, including English, Russian, Hebrew, and Yiddish. Large print books are also available. For more information email library@jbilibrary.org or call and ask for the Library. Additionally offers free programs; visit the website for more information.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—ANDREW HEISKELL BRAILLE AND TALKING BOOK LIBRARY

40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011
Telephone: 212.206.5400
www.nypl.org/locations/heiskell

Provides reading materials for people who are blind, visually impaired, or have a reading disability or a physical disability that makes it difficult to read a book or standard print. Audiobooks, as well as an audiobook player, or refreshable Braille display and digital Braille, can be mailed to your home free of charge. Also provides access to a free audiobook app, on-site assistive technol-

ogy, and one-on-one technology coaching. Call, visit the website, or email talkingbooks@nypl.org for more information.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

www.nypl.org/accessibility

www.nypl.org/locations/map

NYPL complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and provides reasonable accommodations upon request for physical access, communications, or other needs to ensure services, activities, and programs are available to people with disabilities. Most library sites are accessible to people using wheelchairs. Full accessibility is indicated on the locations web page listed above. Libraries have assistive technology for those with hearing and/or vision loss. For patrons who are deaf or hard of hearing, sign language interpretation or real-time captioning for library classes and programs can be arranged. Please email accessibility@nypl.org at least two weeks ahead of time to request accommodations.

NYS COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND (NYSCB)

Telephone: 866.871.3000

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/nyscb>

Provides information on financial resources and vocational training. Help with transportation and use of Braille is available. To be eligible, one must be blind from birth or have been declared legally blind. Call or visit the website for more information and district office locations.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—ACCES-VR (VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION)

89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234

Telephone: 800.222.5627

www.acces.nysed.gov/vr

Provides vocational training and job placement services. Also offers individual counseling and can help sponsor a client through college. Call for an appointment. Contact for updates on ACCES-VR orientation sessions and services.

Bronx residents: 718.931.3500

Brooklyn residents: 718.722.6700

Manhattan residents: 212.630.2300

Harlem Office: 212.961.4420

Queens residents: 347.510.3100

Staten Island Office: 718.816.4800

NYS OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

44 Holland Avenue, Albany, NY 12229

Telephone: 866.946.9733

<https://opwdd.ny.gov>

Coordinates services for individuals with developmental disabilities. Provides direct service and referrals to a network of providers with a wide variety of services and support. Call or visit the website for locations and more information.

I/DD ID Cards

Identification cards are available to people who have a medically diagnosed developmental disability. I/DD ID cards contain basic information, along with an emergency contact, and are meant to be presented to law enforcement, firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel to aid in the communication process. The cards are free and voluntary. Visit the website at <https://opwdd.ny.gov/form/i-dd-id-cards> to request an ID card.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION—PARKING PERMITS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

30-30 Thomson Avenue, 2nd Floor, Long Island City, NY 11101

Telephone: 718.433.3100 / TTY: 212.504.4115

www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/pppinfo.shtml

Provides information and the application for obtaining a special parking permit for disabled residents. Call for more information, including eligibility requirements.

NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



100 Gold Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 311 / Videophone: 646.396.5830

www.nyc.gov/mopd

Offers information and referrals in the areas of housing, transportation, discrimination, education, employment, health, Social Security, and services to the homebound. Multiple languages spoken.

NYC TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION—ACCESSIBILITY DISPATCH PROGRAM



Telephone: 311 or 646.599.9999

<https://accessibledispatch.com>

Provides wheelchair accessible green and yellow taxi dispatching services. Accommodates pickups and drop-offs in all five boroughs and NYC airports. There are no extra costs for passengers. Call, visit the website, or download the Accessible Dispatch mobile app to book a taxi.

BARRIER FREE LIVING

637 East 138th Street, Bronx, NY 10454

www.bflnyc.org

Secret Garden Intake: 212.533.4358 (Mon–Fri 9–5)

Freedom House: 212.400.64700

Offers services and support for survivors of domestic violence with disabilities. The Secret Garden program provides counsel-

ing, support, advocacy, and safety planning; calls made outside intake hours will be forwarded to Safe Horizon. Freedom House is a fully accessible shelter (90–180 day stay) for women, men, and children, serving both families and single individuals; call for more information and availability. Also provides supportive housing. Potential tenants must be referred through a social worker and complete a 2010E application. Services also available in American Sign Language (ASL).

CENTER FOR HEARING AND COMMUNICATION

50 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10004
Telephone: 917.305.7700 / TTY: 917.305.7999
www.chchearing.org

Offers a comprehensive program of rehabilitative and human services for those who are deaf or hard of hearing including free hearing screenings, assistive devices, and listening center. Lip-reading offered. Mental health options include individual psychotherapy, couples therapy, family therapy, therapeutic support groups, and crisis intervention. Sign language is also available. Contact for an appointment. Telehealth services are available.

THE DEAF HOTLINE

www.thedeafhotline.org

Provides safe, confidential, ASL accessible support for people experiencing abuse nationwide. Offers advocacy and information regarding domestic violence and sexual assault 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Also provides educational resources and referrals.

FEDCAP REHABILITATION SERVICES

Headquarters: 633 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10017
Telephone: 212.727.4200
www.fedcap.org

Offers comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities who are ages 18 and over and referred by ACCES-VR, the Commission for the Blind, or the Department of Veterans Affairs. Provides business solutions and educational services.

HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (HLAA)—NYC CHAPTER

PO Box 602, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10101

Telephone: 212.769.4327

www.hearinglossnyc.org

Provides information, education, support, and advocacy for people with hearing loss. Visit the website for chapter meeting information. All meetings are currently online and captioned. In person meetings, when they resume, will feature open captioning and meeting rooms are equipped with audio loops, which transmit sound directly to hearing aids and cochlear implants equipped with telecoils. An ASL interpreter is available upon request with five business days' notice. Spanish Captions on request.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS (ILCS)

Nonprofit community-based and independent organizations run by and for individuals with disabilities in NYC. The following organizations are not affiliated with one another in terms of shared staff, administration, or funding. All do share a similar mission working toward an accessible society for all people, and all of the following organizations offer a range of services to assist people with disabilities to live independent lives. Please contact the individual organization for information on particular services offered and updated information on appointments.

Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York (serves all five boroughs)

1010 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 301, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.674.2300

www.cidny.org

Bronx Independent Living Services
2330 Hoffman Street, C-1A, Bronx, NY 10458
Telephone: 718.515.2800
<https://bils.org>

Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled
25 Elm Place, 5th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.998.3000 / TTY: 718.998.7406
www.bcid.org

Harlem Independent Living Center
289 St. Nicholas Avenue, Lower Level, Suite 21, New York, NY 10027
Telephone: 212.222.7122 / Videophone: 646.755.3092
<https://hilc.org>

Queens Center for Independence of the Disabled NY
80-02 Kew Gardens Road, Suite 400, Kew Gardens, NY 11415
Telephone: 646.442.1520
www.cidny.org

Staten Island Center for Independent Living
470 Castleton Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301
Telephone: 718.720.9016
www.siciliving.org

INSTITUTE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT (ICD)

123 William Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10038
Telephone: 212.585.6000
www.icdnyc.org

Provides services to individuals with disabilities. Vocational training programs include building-repair technician, custodial services, information technology, and human services. Offers work-readiness programs and job-placement services. Provides a free CompTIA A+ certification training program, where participants also receive one-on-one counseling, work-readiness training, test preparation, and job-placement assistance.

JOB PATH  

256 West 38th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10018
Telephone: 212.944.0564
www.jobpathnyc.org

Assists in finding employment for developmentally disabled people. Must have Medicaid and Office for People with Developmental Disabilities eligibility. Referrals from ACCES-VR and other agencies accepted. Offers Community Connections and Supported Living, providing individuals with assistance and safeguards as needed. Individuals should first contact ACCES-VR for a referral.

LIGHTHOUSE GUILD VISION PLUS HEALTH 

250 West 64th Street, New York, NY 10023
Telephone: 800.284.4422 / TTY: 711
<https://lighthouseguild.org>

Provides a range of services for people who are blind or visually impaired, including those with multiple disabilities or chronic medical conditions. Offers assistance with learning how to navigate one's home, work, and the city, using adaptive technology, getting and keeping a job, and coping emotionally with the stress of vision loss. Provides access to a health center for diabetes-related services. Offers tele-support groups for people of all ages. The GuildCare Adult Day Healthcare program provides care for adults ages 18 and over who have chronic health conditions (required for eligibility) and functional vision impairment (not required for eligibility), who require assistance of daily living (ADLs). Also has a Technology Center offering resources for vision care, rehabilitation, and technology training. Contact for more information.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)

Telephone: 511 / TTY: 711
Access-A-Ride: 877.337.2017

www.mta.info

Offers fare discounts for people with disabilities. Access-A-Ride provides transportation for people who are unable to use public bus or subway service for some or all of their trips. Call or visit the website for applications, more information, or for a list of accessible subway and rail stations for customers who have ambulatory disabilities, are accompanied by a service animal, or use a wheelchair.

NEW YORK CENTER FOR LAW AND JUSTICE—LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM

2095 Broadway, Suite 411, New York, NY 10023

Telephone: 212.757.2800

<https://lawjusticecenter.org>

Provides free legal services to indigent, deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing New Yorkers on a range of civil matters, including housing, family, public benefits, student loans, immigration, and asylum cases. Additional programs include the Social Services Project, Advocacy and Outreach Project, Deaf Rights Project, and the Holocaust Survivors Program.

NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)— SOCIAL SECURITY SDNY PROJECT

Provides free representation to individuals who are appealing their denial of Social Security Disability benefits in the US District Court for the Southern District of New York, after exhausting all administrative remedies.

See the full listing for NYCLA on [page 206](#).

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR INCLUSIVE DISASTER STRATEGIES—DISABILITY & DISASTER HOTLINE

Hotline: 800.626.4959

<https://disasterstrategies.org/hotline>

Provides information, referrals, guidance, technical assistance, and resources to people with disabilities, families, allies, and organizations assisting disaster impacted individuals with disabilities and others seeking assistance with immediate and urgent disaster-related needs. The team is led by experts on the many issues affecting people with disabilities in disasters and strategies for meeting those immediate needs; responds as soon as possible.

VISIONS

Telephone: 888.245.8333

<https://visionsvcb.org>

VISIONS Headquarters

500 Greenwich Street, Suite 302, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 212.625.1616

VISIONS at Selis Manor

135 West 23rd Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 646.486.4444

Provides rehabilitation and social services to blind and visually impaired people of all ages to adjust to blindness and vision loss, lead independent lives, and obtain work. Offers vision rehabilitation therapy, orientation and mobility training, occupational therapy, low vision exams and aids, counseling, workforce development services, training and support for families and unpaid caregivers, public education, and information and referral services including the Blindline website and call center.

Women

I'VE NEVER ONCE OVERCOME MY DISABILITY, BUT I HAVE OVERCOME THE DESIRE TO SLAP SOMEONE EVERY SINGLE DAY OF MY LIFE. AND THAT'S WHAT SHOULD BE CELEBRATED.

— IMANI BARBARIN

Organizations

ACLU—REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM PROJECT

125 Broad Street, 18th Floor, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 212.549.2500

www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/prisoners-rights

The Reproductive Freedom Project advocates for incarcerated pregnant people to receive reproductive health services. Write for a Know Your Rights fact sheet. If you are pregnant, being in prison or jail does not mean you lose your right to decide whether to continue your pregnancy or have an abortion.



Your rights:

- You have the right to an abortion if you want one, and to refuse an abortion if you do not want one.
- You have the right to prenatal and other medical care for your pregnancy, and postpartum care.
- You cannot be forced to pay before you can get the medical care you need.
- You have the right to refuse sterilization or other unwanted birth control after your pregnancy.

What to do if you think your rights have been violated:

- If you are not getting the medical care you need, ask other medical staff to help you.
- Document everything that happens. Put your request for an abortion or other medical care in writing and keep a copy. Also, keep a list of the people you've spoken to or contacted and write down what they say and the dates and times you spoke to them.
- In addition to your request for medical care, you should also file a grievance (an official complaint) if your medical needs are not met.
- If your grievance is denied or rejected, file an appeal and pay attention to all the rules and deadlines of the grievance system,

which are usually written in the “inmate handbook”. For more information on filing a grievance, please see [page 229](#).

If you are not being provided the medical care you need, contact your lawyer or the ACLU.



A BEAUTIFUL HEART MINISTRIES   

86-45 Edgerton Blvd., Jamaica Estates, NY 11432

Telephone: 516.601.3390

www.abeautifulheartministries.org

Offers a range of support and services to formerly incarcerated women, girls, and gender-fluid individuals including, educational tools, trauma-informed care, safe housing, employment pathways, entrepreneurship, workshops, and seminars. She Writes Her Trauma is a wellness program where participants come together to write about their trauma. The When She Comes Home Initiative provides care packages to women and girls returning home from a period of incarceration for up to three months.

ACACIA NETWORK—GREENHOPE SERVICES FOR WOMEN, INC.  

435 East 119th Street, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 212.360.4002

<https://acacianetwork.org/greenhope>

Provides residential programs for women with a history of a substance use disorder who are seeking treatment. Services include trauma informed client-centered clinical care, individual and group counseling, mental health services, referrals to primary care physicians and specialists (including medication assisted treatment), educational and career/vocational services, on-site childcare services and parenting classes/support, connections with local community schools and children’s organizations, benefits enrollment, and referral to aftercare services.

HOUR CHILDREN

Provides comprehensive services to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their families.

See the full listing for Hour Children on [page 348](#).

THE LADIES OF HOPE MINISTRIES (THE LOHM)

8 West 126th Street, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 646.820.0011

<https://thelohm.org>

Offers programs for women impacted by the criminal legal system. The Rapid Rehousing (RRH) program in NYC provides housing support and services to women fleeing domestic violence and those impacted by the criminal legal system; pairs short- to medium-term rental assistance with comprehensive case management. Pathways 4 Equity (P4E) is a 12-month career fellowship program for women directly impacted by the criminal legal system offering personal and professional development training followed by a 9-month paid placement with an employer partner. Faces of Women Imprisoned (FOWI) is a Speakers Bureau for system-impacted women to engage with and reshape public conversations about criminal legal system reform. Participants receive training and opportunities to earn income through public speaking engagements across the country. In collaboration with Google, offers the Grow with Google Digital and Professional Skills Workshops. The workshops are designed to build digital skills for employment and navigate the digital landscape.

PROVIDENCE HOUSE

Provides transitional residences, individual apartments, and permanent supportive housing for women recently paroled from prison, and their children.

See the full listing for Providence House on [page 88](#).

RISING GROUND—STEPS TO END FAMILY VIOLENCE

151 Lawrence Street, 5th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 212.437.3500 / Helpline: 877.783.7794

www.risingground.org

Offers individual and group support, legal advocacy, and court accompaniment to survivors of intimate partner violence and other forms of gender-based violence who have been criminalized for their efforts to survive or resist abusive partner behavior.

VOLUNTEERS OF LEGAL SERVICE (VOLS)—INCARCERATED MOTHERS LAW PROJECT

40 Worth Street, Suite 829, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 212.966.4400

<https://volsprobono.org>

Provides legal services to incarcerated mothers at Rikers Island, Taconic Correctional Facility, and Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. Services include helping mothers locate or re-establish contact with children; understand foster care placement; understand pending proceedings, including adoption and termination of parental rights; improve communication with assigned family court attorneys; participate in family court proceedings; and plan for post-incarceration, including reunification.

WILDCAT—THE WOMEN’S PROJECT (TWP)

Telephone: 917.748.9795 or 929.695.0102

www.twp-nyc.org


An alternative to pre-trial detention and prison for women-identifying individuals with pending criminal cases in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan. Provides holistic, trauma-informed care through continued coordinated support, court advocacy, assistance obtaining benefits, and help with medical care and employment. Services

include creating personalized service plans and facilitating weekly wellness workshops and groups. All referrals must come through defense counsel; people who are not defense counsel and know someone that would benefit from services can reach out and the assigned attorney will be contacted.

WOMEN'S PRISON ASSOCIATION (WPA)   



Provides a range of services for women who have been impacted by the criminal legal system, and their families.

See the full listing for WPA on [page 37](#).

NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC) PROGRAM 

Growing Up Healthy Hotline: 800.522.5006
www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/wic

Provides vouchers that can be used at neighborhood stores to buy WIC foods such as milk, cheese, juice, formula, cereal, and eggs. Eligibility criteria include being pregnant, breastfeeding, or post-partum; having children under the age of 5; being at nutritional or medical risk; and being income-eligible. Verified public assistance, Medicaid, and food stamp participants are automatically WIC eligible. Call for a referral. Multiple languages spoken.

NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE—FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS (FJC)  

Provides free and confidential legal, counseling, and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence, gender-based violence, elder abuse, and sex trafficking, with immediate assistance for victims of domestic violence, regardless of language, immigration, or economic status.

See the full listing for FJC on [page 351](#).

THE BOWERY MISSION—WOMEN'S CENTERS

Provides residential programs and transitional housing for women ages 18–55 with services including counseling, life-skills classes, money management, and job training in a private home.

See the full listing for The Bowery Mission on [page 89](#).

BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER DETECTION

The **NYS Department of Health** offers free breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening to eligible, uninsured and underinsured individuals through **Cancer Services Program** partnerships in every county and borough in NYS. To connect to free breast, cervical, or colorectal cancer screening, diagnostic, treatment and support services in your community, call **866.442.2262**. For more information, visit www.health.ny.gov/diseases/cancer/services.

MSK Ralph Lauren Center
1919 Madison Avenue, New York, NY, 10035
Telephone: 212.987.1777

Provides breast and cervical cancer screening at no out-of-pocket cost for women in the Harlem community through the NYS Cancer Services Program.

Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center
300 East 66th Street, Floors 1–4, New York, NY 10065
Telephone: 646.888.5200

Services include medical oncology, surgery consultations, chemotherapy, pathology, diagnostic imaging including mammograms, gynecologic medical services, and screening programs. Interpreter service available.

American-Italian Cancer Foundation's Mammogram Bus
Hotline: 877.628.9090
www.americanitaliancancer.org/breast-cancer-screening-schedule.html

Travels NYC to provide no-cost mammograms and clinical breast exams to medically underserved women ages 40–79, who have

not had a mammogram in the past 12 months. Call to schedule an appointment; walk-ins are accommodated whenever possible.

CRIME VICTIMS TREATMENT CENTER (CVTC)  

Provides medical, legal, and psychological support for survivors of sexual assault and interpersonal violence.

See the full listing for CVTC on [page 156](#).

GRACE INSTITUTE

40 Rector Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10006

Telephone: 212.832.7605

<https://graceinstitute.org>

Offers tuition-free job-skills training for women in administrative fields, including positions in the healthcare sector. Trainings are hybrid (in-person and online). Provides job placement and job retention support for low-income women. Visit the website to find more information on requirements and the application process.

HOT BREAD KITCHEN

A nonprofit providing free culinary workforce training, small business incubation, and an ecosystem of support for women, immigrants, and people of color pursuing economic opportunities in the food industry.

See the full listing for Hot Bread Kitchen on [page 379](#).

NONTRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN (NEW)

An employment and training program for women and nonbinary individuals interested in building and construction trades, public utilities, transportation, green jobs, and building maintenance and operations industries.

See the full listing for NEW on [page 380](#).

PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF GREATER NEW YORK

Telephone: 800.230.7526

www.ppgreaterny.org

Offers a wide range of services including abortion (in-clinic or medication), birth control, cancer screenings, emergency contraception (“the morning-after pill”), gynecological care (including Pap tests), health insurance enrollment, HIV testing and counseling, HPV vaccine, LGBTQ+ health, menopausal hormone therapy, PEP and PrEP, pregnancy testing and options counseling, sexually transmitted infections testing, hormone therapy, vasectomy, and wellness exams. Provides care to everyone, regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, immigration status, or ability to pay. Services vary by location.

SAFE HORIZON

2 Lafayette Street, #3, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.577.7700

www.safehorizon.org

Domestic Violence Hotline: 800.621.4673

Rape and Sexual Assault Hotline: 212.227.3000

Crime Victims: 866.689.4357

Offers crisis counseling and information or referrals to a wide variety of resources, including crime victim services and domestic violence shelters for women who are survivors of domestic violence in multiple locations across NYC. Can provide new locks. Multiple languages spoken. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

SAKHI FOR SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN

PO Box 1333, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008

Telephone: 212.714.9153 / Helpline: 212.868.6741

<https://sakhi.org>

An organization fighting for the end of violence against South Asian people of all gender identities and sexual orientations. Specializes in working with survivors of South Asian descent, but services are open to all. Provides services including crisis response, safety planning, ongoing emotional support, weekly support groups, public benefits, accompaniments, and translation assistance. Provides advocacy in court, during healthcare visits, and at public benefits and welfare agencies. Also offers immigration and civic engagement services, and youth empowerment programs. Assistance available in seven South Asian languages including Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati, Nepali, Punjabi, Sylheti, and Urdu.



WIN NYC

Provides shelter and supportive services for women with children.

See the full listing for Win NYC on [page 355](#).

Helplines

WOMEN
300

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY—NEW YORK  
PO Box 1357, New York, NY 10018
Helpline: 800.227.2345

www.cancer.org/about-us/local/new-york.html

Provides help with any patient services, resource requests, or cancer information questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

THE GROWING UP HEALTHY HOTLINE 
Hotline: 800.522.5006 / TTY: 800.655.1789

www.health.ny.gov/community/pregnancy/health_care/prenatal/guh.htm

Provides referrals to low-income people who are pregnant, or who have children under the age of five, and assistance with accessing affordable prenatal care or other healthcare, contraceptives, insurance, food pantries, and other services for families. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

Hotline: 800.799.7233

www.thehotline.org

Provides free and confidential advocacy and information regarding domestic violence and sexual assault 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

REPRO LEGAL HELPLINE

Helpline: 844.868.2812

www.reprolegalhelpline.org

A free, confidential helpline where people can get legal information or advice about self-managed abortion, young people's access to abortion or judicial bypass, and referrals to local resources.

SEX CRIMES HELPLINE

Telephone: 212.335.9373

<https://manhattanda.org/victim-resources/sex-crimes>

Takes information over the phone if a crime has occurred recently or in the past. Directs people to Manhattan Special Victims Squad, or to Survivor Services Bureau (SSB), for counseling and other social services. Provides information and referrals.

STRONGHEARTS NATIVE HELPLINE

Helpline: 844.762.8483

<https://strongheartshelpline.org>

A safe, confidential, and anonymous domestic and sexual violence helpline for Native Americans and Alaska Natives, offering culturally-appropriate support and advocacy. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Older People

HERE I AM,
LOCKED IN MY OWN SHADOW
FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS,
AND YET
I HAVE REACHED MY HAND
THROUGH STONE AND STEEL AND RAZOR WIRE
AND TOUCHED THE HEART OF THE WORLD.
MITAKUYE OYASIN, MY LAKOTA BRETHERN SAY.
WE ARE ALL RELATED.
WE ARE ONE.

— LEONARD PELTIER

Organizations

OSBORNE ASSOCIATION—ELDER REENTRY INITIATIVE PROJECT (ERI)

Transitional Planners work with adults ages 50 and over in NYC jails and NYS prisons to create individualized, age-appropriate discharge and care management service plans. Participants are connected to post-release services through a network of providers and receive follow-up services. Participants are connected to resources such as healthcare, benefits, employment training, and housing (including skilled nursing facilities), as well as social support, career counseling, resume assistance, benefits application, and support with technology.

See the full listing for Osborne Association on [page 34](#).

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—SERVICES FOR OLDER ADULTS

10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Telephone: 718.236.1760

www.bklynlibrary.org/outreach/older-adults

Offers a range of programs, services, resources, and events for adults ages 50 and over and their caregivers including lectures, health and wellness series, musical performances, art classes, classes on computer basics, and more. Also provides retirement literacy, estate planning workshops, senior housing and rent freeze programs, and job-readiness programs. The Books by Mail program provides books, audiobooks, and videos to people who are homebound or have a visual disability; and the Books-to-Go service supplies books, audiobooks, and videos to nursing homes, senior centers, and adult day-care centers.

NYS OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES— ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS)

Telephone: 844.697.3505

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/adult-svcs/aps>

A mandated service, provided by local social services districts, involving intake investigation and assessment of referrals of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of vulnerable adults. APS workers develop service plans for eligible clients to remedy physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, or to address unmet, essential needs of adults. Services provided (directly or through referral) range from safety monitoring, linkages with other service providers (health, mental health, etc.), assistance in obtaining benefits, informal money management, appointment as a representative payee, and petitioning a court for appointment as a guardian or for some other legal intervention. Call Mon–Fri 8:30am–8pm.

NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Contact to file a complaint of discrimination in employment, housing, and/or public accommodations based on age, race, color, religion/creed, natural hair or hairstyles, actual or perceived height or weight, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, gender (including sexual harassment), gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, veteran or active military service member status, pregnancy, marital status, and partnership status.

See the full listing for NYC Commission on Human Rights on [page 233](#).

NYC DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING (DFTA)

Ageing Connect: 212.244.6469 or 311

www.nyc.gov/aging

Partners with community-based organizations to provide services

through senior centers including cultural, creative, recreational, and fitness activities in addition to nutritious meals; case-management agencies, which help seniors obtain needed in-home services, entitlements, and benefits; home-delivered meal programs; mental health and friendly visiting programs; naturally occurring retirement communities; and more throughout NYC. Also has a Senior Employment Services Unit, Caregiver Resource Center, Elderly Crime Victims Resource Center, Grandparent Resource Center, Foster Grandparent Program, Bill Payer Program, and volunteer opportunities. For more information call Aging Connect Mon–Fri 8:30am–5:30pm to speak with an aging specialist.

NYC MAYOR’S OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE— FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS (FJC)



Provides free and confidential legal, counseling, and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence, gender-based violence, elder abuse, and sex trafficking, with immediate assistance for victims of domestic violence, regardless of language, immigration, or economic status.

See the full listing for FJC on [page 351](#).

CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL—SENIOR SERVICES

Offers aid and social activities. Provides information and help in several languages on entitlements, food stamps, and housing applications.

See the full listing for Chinese-American Planning Council on [page 259](#).

DOROT

171 West 85th Street, New York, NY 10024
Telephone: 212.769.2850

www.dorotusa.org

Provides cultural and educational enrichment services for adults ages 60 and over. Visit the website for a list of ongoing programs.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)— REDUCED-FARE METROCARD

Telephone: 511 / TTY: 711

<https://new.mta.info/fares/reduced-fare>

Offers fare discounts for people ages 65 and over. Call or visit the website for more information and application instructions.

NYC-ARTS—CULTURAL GUIDE FOR SENIORS

www.nyc-arts.org

Provides details on programs for older people, ticket and membership discounts, and assistance available for visitors with disabilities, by borough. The cultural groups include museums, dance and theater companies, libraries, performing arts venues, zoos, and more.

RESERVE

Telephone: 877.290.6145

www.reserveinc.org

Matches continuing professionals ages 50 and over with nonprofit organizations, public institutions, and government agencies that need their expertise. Participants are placed in capacity-building and direct service part-time positions, which draw on the professional skills they acquired during their primary careers. Positions are paid.

SENIOR PLANET



127 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 646.590.0615

Hotline: 888.713.3495 (Mon–Fri 10–8)

<https://seniorplanet.org>

Helps older people access technology through courses, programs, and activities. Older people can also learn how to connect with friends and loved ones through video conferencing. Call the hotline for one-on-one technology assistance and more information on class registration. Additionally, conducts virtual programming.

SERVICE PROGRAM FOR OLDER PEOPLE (SPOP)

Administrative Office: 302 West 91st Street, New York, NY 10024

Telephone: 212.787.7120

<https://spop.org>

Provides comprehensive behavioral healthcare for New Yorkers ages 55 and over. Also offers bereavement support groups for adults of all ages. Accepts most insurances including Medicare and Medicaid.

SERVICES AND ADVOCACY FOR LGBTQ+ ELDERS (SAGE)

An advocacy and support organization for LGBTQ+ elders.

See the full listing for SAGE on [page 320](#).

Medical Care

A complete guide to the new HIICAP guidebook can be found online at www.nyc.gov/site/dfta/services/health-insurance-assistance.page.

Effective in 2023, the **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS)**,

created a **Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for recently released formerly incarcerated people**. The SEP allows formerly incarcerated people to enroll in Medicare in the 12 months following their release without facing any financial penalties for late enrollment. For more information visit www.cms.gov/training-education/look-up-topics/special-populations/incarcerated-medicare-beneficiaries.

Justice in Aging provides information on reentry issues for older adults, including the Medicare Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for formerly incarcerated people, and connecting to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security, available at <https://justiceinaging.org/reentry-issues-for-older-adults>.

MEDICARE ^{ES}

Telephone: 800.633.4227 / TTY: 877.486.2048

www.medicare.gov

The federal government's health insurance program for people ages 65 and over.

ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE (EPIC) ^{ES}

Telephone: 800.332.3742 / TTY: 800.290.9138

www.health.ny.gov/health_care/epic

Helps income-eligible seniors ages 65 and over to supplement out-of-pocket Medicare Part D drug plan costs. Call or visit the website for information on eligibility.

Housing

For more organizations see the *Housing* chapter, starting from [page 84](#). The Doe Fund, The Fortune Society, Greenhope, Hour Children, Providence House, and the Women's Prison Association all provide housing for older people.

NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)—FAMILY REENTRY PROGRAM

Information Line: 212.306.6024

www.nyc.gov/site/nycha/index.page

Helps to reunite select individuals leaving prison and jail with their families who live in qualified public housing apartments and provides reentry services. Eligible individuals must demonstrate that they are motivated to make a positive change in their lives and must agree to intensive case management services. Accepts applications from currently incarcerated people who have a release date or from people who were released from a prison, jail, juvenile facility, or federal facility within the last three years.

CENTERS HEALTHCARE

4770 White Plains Road, Bronx, NY 10470

Telephone: 718.931.9700

<https://centershealthcare.com>

Composed of over 40 nursing homes and 2 assisted living facilities across New York State, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. Offers discharge planning for the chronically ill.

LGBTQI+

COMMUNITY IS WHEN YOU NEVER LET GO OF EACH OTHER.
NOT EVEN AFTER YOU'RE GONE.

— GRETCHEN FELKER-MARTIN, *MANHUNT*

Protections Against Discrimination

Under the NYC Human Rights Law, it is illegal to discriminate based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender. Discrimination because of gender includes discrimination based on gender identity or expression, or being intersex. These protections cover discrimination in many places including work, school, housing, and public spaces. The law also protects NYC's LGBTQI+ communities against retaliation, discriminatory harassment, and bias-based profiling by law enforcement.

Visit www.nyc.gov/site/cchr/media/pride.page for information on how to identify discrimination; myth, facts, and common misconceptions about gender identity and gender expression protections; brochures on protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; a resource portal on equal bathroom access; and legal guidance.

Lambda Legal (full listing on [page 202](#)) provides Know Your Rights resources on their website at <https://legacy.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights> including rights in court, a legal guide for transgender people and their advocates, a section for LGBTQI+ teens and young adults, and more.

What To Do If You Face Discrimination

If you have experienced discrimination contact the **NYC Commission on Human Rights** at **212.416.0197** or use the online form at www.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page to report your case. You are able to report anonymously and are never asked about immigration status.

Rights During Police Interactions

- The police are not allowed to make transphobic or homophobic remarks or discriminate against you based on actual or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation.
- You have the right to be referred to by names, titles, and pronouns that reflect your gender identity, even if it doesn't match the information on your ID.

- It is illegal for police to frisk or search you to determine your gender.
- If you are in police custody, you should be searched by an officer of the gender you request. You should also be held in sex segregated police facilities according to your gender identity, even if it differs from the sex you were assigned at birth, unless there is a concern for your safety.
- If you are concerned for your safety, you should ask to be treated as a “special category prisoner” and held in a cell by yourself. The police cannot handcuff you to rails, bars, or chairs for unreasonable periods of time because you asked to be treated as a “special category prisoner.”

For more information on rights during police interactions, see [page 185](#).

Healthcare

In NYC, it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression in public accommodations, including healthcare settings. The NYC Health website, available at www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/lgbtq.page, provides information on the Health Care Bill of Rights and more resources.

If you believe you have been mistreated or denied care because of your sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, you can file a complaint with the **NYC Commission on Human Rights** by calling **212.416.0197** or filling out the online form at www.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page.

The **NYC Health Map** is a directory of health services in NYC including LGBTQ health services for primary care, sexual health care, gender-affirming care, and counseling. Available online at <https://a816-healthpsi.nyc.gov/NYHealthMap>.

Organizations & Resources

NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Contact to file a complaint of discrimination in employment, housing, and/or public accommodations based on age, race, color, religion/creed, natural hair or hairstyles, actual or perceived height or weight, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, gender (including sexual harassment), gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, veteran or active military service member status, pregnancy, marital status, and partnership status.

See the full listing for NYC Commission on Human Rights on [page 233](#).

NYC COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE—LGBTQ+ GUIDE

1 Centre Street, Room 517, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.669.3916

<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/services/for-the-public/lgbtq-guide/overview>

A directory of LGBTQ+ organizations and programs available in NYC. Write to request a printed copy.

ADVOCATES FOR TRANS EQUALITY (A4TE)

228 Park Avenue South, PMB 38268, New York, NY 10003

Telephone: 202.642.4542

<https://transequality.org>

Advocates for the legal and political rights of trans people. The Name Change Project provides pro bono legal name change referrals for low-income TGNCNB (transgender, gender nonconforming, nonbinary) people through partnerships with law firms and corporate law departments in NYC. The Trans Health Project aims to

ensure that all transgender and nonbinary people can access the trans-related healthcare needed. The website provides resources and tools, including an insurance tutorial. Visit the website for more information on eligibility and intake forms.

ALI FORNEY CENTER (AFC)

Provides emergency housing and services to LGBTQI+ youth experiencing homelessness.

See the full listing for Ali Forney Center on [page 339](#).

ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)

116 Nassau Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10038
Telephone: 212.714.1184 / Hotline: 212.714.1141
<https://avp.org>

Offers free and confidential short-term crisis counseling and support services to the LGBTQI+ community and people living with HIV who are survivors of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and hate violence. Legal services and individual and group counseling are available. Walk-in hours are Mon–Thu 12pm–4pm. The crisis hotline offers bilingual 24-hour assistance from counselors and trained volunteers.

BLACK & PINK NYC

PO Box 1741, New York, NY 10013
www.blackandpink.org/chapters/nyc

Works toward prison abolition in solidarity with LGBTQIA2S+ people and people living with HIV/AIDS who are incarcerated, on parole, or recently released in NY/NJ/CT. Services for incarcerated members include letter-writing, pen-pal listings, and birthday and holiday cards; visits to incarcerated people; a quarterly chapter newsletter to share news, political education, and art/creative writing; packages of basic essentials for those getting released; and advocating

for broader awareness and policy changes to dismantle the prison system. Volunteer-run, but offers stipends and compensation to formerly incarcerated volunteers.

CalLEN-LORDE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Telephone: 212.271.7200

<https://callen-lorde.org>

3144 3rd Avenue, Bronx, NY 10451

Telephone: 718.215.1800

40 Flatbush Avenue Ext., Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 718.215.1818

356 West 18th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.271.7200

Provides healthcare and related services for the LGBTQI+ community and people living with HIV/AIDS, regardless of ability to pay. Offers patient-centered primary care, HIV care, women's healthcare, adolescent healthcare, transgender healthcare including hormone therapy, mental healthcare, case management, care coordination, dental services, sexual health services, and insurance navigation assistance. Call before visiting and for information on current services and locations. The Crisis Text Line, available by **texting callenlorde to 741741**, offers free, confidential crisis counseling to everyone, regardless of their status as a client, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The TransAtlas, available at <https://transatlas.callen-lorde.org>, is an online directory and resource map made by and for people of transgender, nonbinary, and/or intersex experience living in NYC.

CENTER FOR ANTI-VIOLENCE EDUCATION

www.caeny.org

Offers Self-Defense and Upstander workshops for women, LGBTQIAGNC people, and anyone at risk from racism and xenopho-

bia. Also provides programs and workshops for young people. Visit the website for schedules.

CHOSEN FAMILY LAW CENTER

30 Wall Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10005

Telephone: 732.639.1657

<https://chosenfamilylawcenter.org>

Offers legal assistance to low-income LGBTQIA+, polyamorous, and chosen family communities in New York. Services include name and gender marker changes; assistance with building a family, such as prenuptial agreements, cohabitation agreements, sperm and egg donor agreements, adoption and parentage, and coparenting; and protections for individuals and families, such as wills and estate documents, powers of attorney, and medical advance directives. Also provides Adjustment of Status (Green Card) assistance for asylees who have been granted asylum based on their LGBTQ status in their home country. Call or visit the website for requirements and more information.

DESTINATION TOMORROW

452 East 149th Street, Suite 3, Bronx, NY 10455

Telephone: 646.723.3325

<https://destinationtomorrow.org>

Offers in-house and referral-based services to the LGBTQIA+ community. Services include a youth drop-in center, counseling, peer support groups, legal referrals, access to a computer lab, and trans-affirming healthcare in partnership with Montefiore Medical Clinic's Cicero Program. Free classes, including job-readiness training and HSE test preparation courses are also available. Check the Instagram account, available as a link on the website, for upcoming programs.

HETRICK-MARTIN INSTITUTE (HMI)

Provides free year-round programs and services for LGBTQIA+ youth ages 13–24.

See the full listing for HMI on [page 341](#).

IDENTITY HOUSE

<https://identityhouse.org>

Walk-in Center

The LGBT Community Center, 208 West 13th Street, New York, NY 10011

Provides peer-counseling, resources, and referrals to support LGBTQI+ adults who are working through issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. The walk-in center is open Saturdays 6pm–8pm. Visit the website for more information and to schedule a virtual appointment.

LAMBDA LEGAL

Provides help and advocacy for the LGBTQI+ community and those living with HIV who have faced discrimination of any kind.

See the full listing for Lambda Legal on [page 202](#).

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY CENTER (THE CENTER)

208 West 13th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.620.7310

<https://gaycenter.org>

Serves as a meeting place for over 400 organizations concerned with the social, health, political, cultural, and business concerns of the LGBTQI+ community. Offers many free and low-cost cultural

and social activities. Provides specialized support, substance use recovery and health services, career services, advocacy programs, and family and youth services. Also hosts a lending library of LGBTQI+ material and a national archive of LGBTQI+ history. Currently incarcerated people can write for resources.

LGBT BAR ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK

Provides several legal services to the LGBTQIA+ community, including an attorney referral service and in-person legal clinic.

See the full listing for LGBT Bar NY on [page 205](#).

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS (NCLR)



National Headquarters

870 Market Street, Suite 370, San Francisco, CA 94102

Telephone: 415.392.6257 / Legal Helpline: 800.528.6257

www.nclrights.org

A national legal organization committed to advancing the civil and human rights of LGBTQI+ people, and their families, through litigation, legislation, policy, and public education. Works at the local, state, and federal levels to ensure that incarcerated LGBTQI+ people are as safely housed as possible and have access to medical care. Visit the website for rights and legal resources.

NEW PRIDE AGENDA (NPA)

www.newprideagenda.org

Empowerment Center

210 West 29th Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Drop-in hours: Tue–Thu, 3pm–6pm

An advocacy organization for LGBTQIA+ people. The Public Health Ambassadors Program is an eight-week prevention and education

program geared towards self-identified sex workers and members of the LGBTQ+ community at high risk of contracting HIV. Let's Talk About It is a seven-week workshop series that focuses on promoting healthier lifestyles for LGBTQIA+ New Yorkers. The We Got You Covered Health & Wellness Linkage Program focuses on increasing retention to care for LGBTQIA+ people of color who are ages 18–30 and live in NYS. The drop-in Empowerment Center offers services including linkage to care, a food pantry, a clothing closet, computer access, and safe sex kits and testing strips. Also offers a financial literacy program and support group. Visit the website for more information including program sign-up, and other ways to get involved.

NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS—LGBTQIA+ SERVICES

www.nychealthandhospitals.org/services/lgbtq-services

Mandates LGBTQIA+ training for all staff. Offers a variety of services through Pride Health Centers including women's health; men's health; gender-affirming services including hormone therapy, puberty blockers, and gender-affirming surgeries; HIV and STD prevention, screening, and treatment services; adolescent care; social work and behavioral health services; and general primary care. Visit the website for information on services, locations, and contacts.

OSBORNE ASSOCIATION

Connects LGBTQIA+ people in NYC who have been impacted by the criminal legal system, or are at risk for involvement, to services that address their specific needs including healthcare, employment, substance use disorder/harm reduction treatment, legal protection and self-advocacy, housing, social activities, and other supports.

See the full listing for Osborne Association on [page 34](#).

POINT OF PRIDE

www.pointofpride.org

Provides financial aid and direct support to trans people in need of health and wellness care. Programs include the Annual Transgender Surgery Fund, HRT Access Fund, Electrolysis Support Fund, Free Chest Binders, Free Femme Shapewear, and the Thrive Fund which provides financial aid towards gender-affirming needs such as prosthetics, fertility preservation, vocal training, medical tattooing, and more. Visit the website for more information including requirements, applications, and a resource library.

SERVICES AND ADVOCACY FOR LGBTQ+ ELDERS (SAGE)

305 7th Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 212.741.2247

www.sageusa.org

An advocacy and support organization for LGBTQ+ elders. Visit the website for information on rights and the National Resource Center on LGBTQ+ Aging. SAGE Centers offer meals, classes, case management, informational resources, veterans' services, social events, and more.

SAGE Center Bronx at Crotona Pride House

1784 Prospect Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457

Telephone: 929.458.2150

Sage Center Brooklyn at Stonewall House

271 Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 646.518.9744

SAGE Center Harlem

220 West 143rd Street, New York, NY 10030

Telephone: 646.660.8951

Edie Windsor SAGE Center

305 7th Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 646.576.8669

SAGE-Pride Center of Staten Island
66 Willow Avenue, Suite 202, Staten Island, NY 10305
Telephone: 718.808.1365

SYLVIA RIVERA LAW PROJECT



147 West 24th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011
Telephone: 212.337.8550
<https://srlp.org>

Provides free legal services, including direct legal representation, to transgender, gender nonconforming, and intersex (TGNCI) people of color and/or people of low-income status. Clients must live in the five boroughs of NYC or be held in a NYS prison and be seeking services related to one of three main projects. The Survival & Self Determination Project helps TGNCI people access services and benefits such as name changes, ID updates, and healthcare-related legal support. The Immigrant Justice Project helps TGNCI people with immigration-related legal assistance, such as status updates and application support. The Prisoner Justice Project provides assistance in civil matters to people held in NYC jails or NYS prisons. Referrals can be made to people whose needs do not fall under these three projects. Also offers Know Your Rights trainings and resources that can be sent to a person's housing, employment, or office. Call or email info@srlp.org for eligibility information and to make an appointment. Email DST@srlp.org for legal support.

TRANS LIFELINE



Mailing Address: 548 Market Street, PMB 15337, San Francisco, CA 94104
Hotline: 877.565.8860
<https://translifeline.org>

A national, trans-led peer support hotline for transgender and questioning people, and a Friends and Family hotline that offers peer mentorship for friends, partners, family members, and professionals supporting trans loved ones and community members.

Calls are anonymous and confidential. 911 will not be called without informed consent.

TRANSGENDER LAW CENTER (TLC)



PO Box 70976, Oakland, CA 94612

Collect: 510.380.8229 (for currently incarcerated people only)

Telephone: 510.587.9696

<https://transgenderlawcenter.org>

A national trans-led advocacy organization. The Legal Information Helpdesk provides basic information about laws and policies that affect transgender people in the areas of employment, healthcare, housing, civil rights, immigration, incarcerated people's rights, and identity document changes. Submit requests to the Helpdesk in English by filling out the online form at <https://transgenderlawcenter.org/legalinfo> or in Spanish by filling out the online form at <https://transgenderlawcenter.org/recursos>.

Currently incarcerated people can write for legal information and resources including Know Your Rights guides for LGBTQ+ people, medical information about transition-related healthcare, and reentry resources.

LGBTQI+
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Rights for Incarcerated Transgender, Intersex, & Gender Nonconforming People

The following is from the ACLU's Know Your Rights fact sheet for incarcerated transgender people available at www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/prisoners-rights.

Or reach out to:

ACLU National Prison Project
915 15th Street NW, 7th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Telephone: 202.393.4930

PREA Standards require prisons and jails to make individualized housing and program placements for all transgender and intersex people, including when assigning them to male or female facilities. Many correctional facilities house transgender people in solitary confinement to protect them from violence. PREA says you cannot be segregated against your will for more than 30 days and if you are in protective custody you must have access to programs, privileges, and education and work opportunities to the extent possible.

Staff must evaluate you for gender dysphoria within a reasonable time if you request it. Medical treatment for incarcerated people diagnosed with gender dysphoria should be delivered according to accepted medical standards. Additionally, blanket bans on specific types of treatments, such as a ban on hormone therapy or gender confirmation surgery, are unconstitutional.

Staff should generally allow you gender-appropriate clothing and grooming supplies and allow you to present yourself in a manner consistent with your gender identity, or they may be in violation of the Eighth Amendment.

Strip searches must be conducted professionally and respectfully. A strip search conducted in full view of other people and staff may violate your privacy rights. If there is no emergency, male staff should not strip search women (including transgender women) and vice versa. Some jails have policies allowing transgender people to choose the gender of the staff who search them. Staff cannot conduct strip and pat down searches solely to assess your genitals. Staff must be trained to conduct searches of transgender and intersex people in a professional and respectful manner, and in the least intrusive manner possible, consistent with security needs. If you request a private shower, PREA requires that officials grant you access.

Information on your legal rights

Get a copy of your prison's or jail's appeal policy. Always follow the policy exactly. People who want to file a federal lawsuit about events in jail or prison must first complete the internal appeals process. This means that you need to know the rules of any appeals (or "grievance") process in your facility, including time

limits on filing an appeal after something happens. In most prisons or jails, you will have to file a written complaint on a form that is provided. The Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) states that you must fully go through the grievance process at your facility before taking a case to court. For more information on filing a grievance, please see [page 229](#).

The PLRA only applies to cases that are brought by an incarcerated person. This means that your case will not be controlled by most of the PLRA provisions if you file it after your release. However, because other legal deadlines may apply, you should always try to get legal advice before you make any decisions about when or how to file a lawsuit about something that happened to you in prison or jail.

Keep track of everything that happened to you—the names of officers and other incarcerated people, where and when things happened, which policies are available, and which are not available, etc. Even if you never bring a case to court, having details about what happened can be very important if you reach out to other people for help. If you are afraid that staff might take your paperwork, send copies to people you trust on the outside. Be aware, though, that if you are not sending information by legal mail to an attorney or legal organization, staff will likely read everything you put in letters or envelopes.

For organizations that specialize in helping transgender people and other LGBTQI+ people, consider reaching out to the **National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)**, the **Transgender Law Center (TLC)**, and the **Sylvia Rivera Law Project** listed in this chapter.

More information on PREA starts on [page 239](#).

People in NYC jails

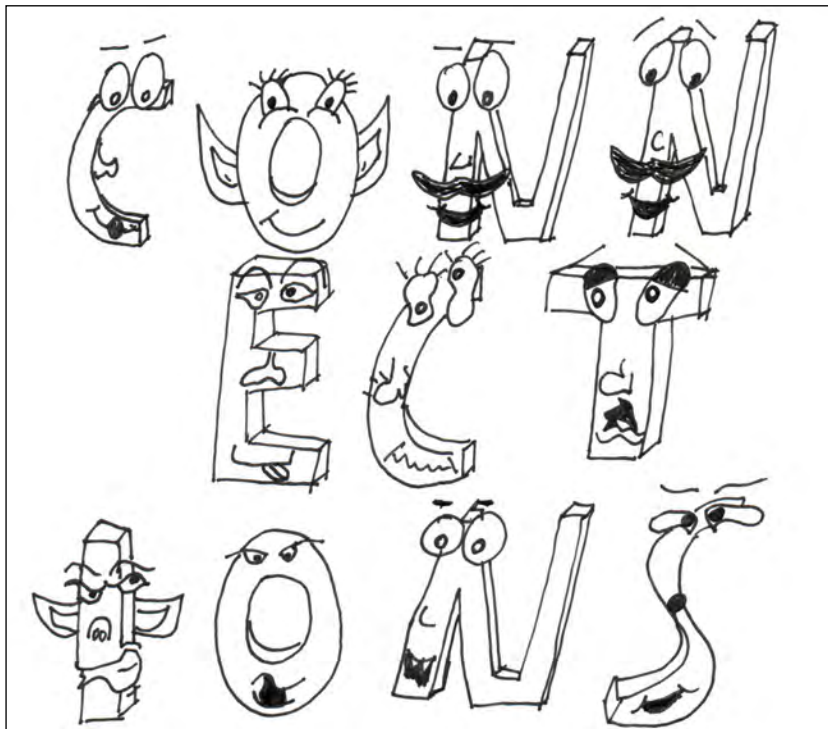
The Legal Handbook for Trans & Gender Nonconforming Folks in NYC Jails, is a free resource for people who have yet to be sentenced for a pending criminal charge, also known as pre-sentence. Information includes legal information, what to expect during a criminal case, getting your property back, access to care, how bail works in NYC, working with a public defender, and resources for

surviving. To request a free copy write to: **Jail & Prison Services,
The New York Public Library, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY
10011.**

Youth

LET A NEW EARTH RISE. LET ANOTHER WORLD BE BORN.
LET A BLOODY PEACE BE WRITTEN IN THE SKY. LET A
SECOND GENERATION FULL OF COURAGE ISSUE FORTH;
LET A PEOPLE LOVING FREEDOM COME TO GROWTH. LET
A BEAUTY FULL OF HEALING AND A STRENGTH OF FINAL
CLENCHING BE THE PULSING IN OUR SPIRITS AND OUR
BLOOD. LET THE MARTIAL SONGS BE WRITTEN, LET THE
DIRGES DISAPPEAR. LET A RACE OF MEN NOW RISE AND
TAKE CONTROL.

— MARGARET WALKER, *FOR MY PEOPLE*



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY BLAZEJ KOT

Raise the Age

In 2017, Raise the Age legislation was signed into law. The legislation raises the age of adult criminal responsibility in the State of New York to the age of 18 for most charges. The changes went into effect for 16-year-olds on 10/1/18 and for 17-year-olds on 10/1/19. The following information is from www.ny.gov/programs/raise-age-0 and www.nycourts.gov/courthelp/Criminal/RTA.shtml.

Parental notification

- Parents must be notified when their children are arrested.
- Questioning of youth must take place in age-appropriate settings, with parental involvement, and for appropriate lengths of time.

Misdemeanors

- All misdemeanor cases (other than Vehicle and Traffic Law misdemeanors) will be heard in Family Court pursuant to the Family Court Act.

Felonies

- All felony cases will start in the Youth Part of the adult criminal court.
- All nonviolent felonies will be transferred from the Youth Part to Family Court unless the District Attorney (DA) files a motion within 30 days showing “extraordinary circumstances” as to why the case should remain in the Youth Part. The Judge must decide within five days whether to prevent the transfer of the case to Family Court.
- Violent felonies can also be transferred from the Youth Part to the Family Court. If the charges do not include the accused displaying a deadly weapon in furtherance of the offense, causing significant physical injury, or engaging in unlawful sexual conduct, the case will transfer to Family Court unless the DA files a motion within 30 days showing “extraordinary circumstances.” If the charge does include an element listed above, removal to Family Court is only possible with the consent of the DA. Vehicle and Traffic Law cases and Class A felonies other than Class A drug offenses cannot be transferred.

- 16- and 17-year-olds whose cases remain in the Youth Part will be referred to as “Adolescent Offenders.” Adult sentencing will apply, but the judge must take the youth’s age into account when sentencing. Adolescent Offenders are eligible for Youthful Offender treatment, as is the current law with respect to 16- and 17-year-olds charged as adults.
- Adolescent Offenders may voluntarily participate in services while their case is pending.

Family Court

- Youth whose cases are heard in the Family Court will be processed pursuant to existing Juvenile Delinquency (JD) laws, which includes the opportunity for adjustment. They will not have a permanent criminal record.

Youth Part of Adult Court

- The Youth Part is a special branch of the adult criminal court presided over by Family Court judges. All 13–15-year-old Juvenile Offenders and all 16–17-year-old Adolescent Offenders will have their cases in the Youth Part.

Facilities

- No 16- or 17-year-old will be sentenced to or detained in a facility with adults, as of October 1, 2018.
- Youth whose cases are heard in Family Court may be detained or placed in OCFS-operated, OCFS-licensed, or ACS facilities (including Close to Home), as Juvenile Delinquents currently are.
- Adolescent Offenders who are detained pretrial will be held in a specialized secure juvenile detention center for older youth, regulated by OCFS and the state commission of correction. Judges have the discretion to order that Adolescent Offenders sentenced to less than a year serve such sentences in a specialized juvenile detention center for older youth.
- Adolescent Offenders who are sentenced to state imprisonment will be placed in an Adolescent Offender facility operated jointly by DOCCS and OFCS.

Organizations & Resources

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN (AFC)

151 West 30th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10001
Telephone: 212.947.9779 / Helpline: 866.427.6033
www.advocatesforchildren.org

Advocates and works on behalf of children who are at risk for school-based discrimination and/or academic failure due to poverty, disability, race, ethnicity, immigrant or English language learner status, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile court systems. Provides free advocacy services and legal representation to families from low-income backgrounds, including representation at school-related hearings and appeals. Serves students ages 0–26 who live in the five boroughs of NYC, including students with disabilities, immigrant students and English language learners, students facing disciplinary issues, students involved in the child welfare system, court-involved youth, and students in temporary housing.

Offers free workshops and trainings, as well as guidebooks and other informational resources for parents, youth, and social service providers. Spanish is spoken with the capacity to serve speakers of other languages via a language line. Call the helpline Mon–Thu 10–4. No walk-ins.

THE ANIMATION PROJECT (TAP)

320 7th Avenue, #201, Brooklyn, NY 11215
www.theanimationproject.org

A therapeutic workforce development program that teaches animation skills to low-income NYC youth through partnerships with schools, jails, courts, and community organizations.




ARTISTIC NOISE 

2185 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., New York, NY 10027
Telephone: 646.256.7296
www.artisticnoise.org

Works with youth and young adults who are unhoused, on probation, living in the shelter system, or have recently returned to their communities after periods of being incarcerated. The Art & Entrepreneurship program works to develop the creative abilities of system-impacted young people ages 14–22 through an exploration of a variety of hands-on artmaking techniques. Partners with the Midtown Community Justice Center and the Center for Justice Innovation to provide creative, therapeutic, alternatives-to-incarceration programming at the courthouse space every Thursday morning. Art & Care is a youth-centered, weekly drop-in program created in collaboration with the School of Visual Arts where drop-in participants receive assistance with basic needs, individualized therapy, and other health-related services, and provides free MetroCards, food, drinks, childcare supplies, artmaking materials, and gift cards. Also has an Alumni Artists in Residence program where alumni members receive monthly support stipends, as well as artmaking materials, free art studio access, a variety of paid artmaking commissions, studio visits from leading art world professionals, and more.

YOUTH

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AVENUES FOR JUSTICE (AFJ)   

100 Centre Street, Room 1541, New York, NY 10013
Telephone: 212.349.6381
www.avenuesforjustice.org

Provides court advocacy and HIRE Up services for job training and certifications, legal rights and life skills training, mental and physical health, wellness care, and academic/educational support to NYC court involved youth ages 13–24.

BRONXCONNECT

432 East 149th Street, 2nd Floor, Bronx, NY 10455**Telephone: 718.402.6872**<https://bronxconnect.org>

A faith-based community organization offering alternatives-to-detention and -incarceration to court-involved youth in the Bronx and Manhattan. Services include court advocacy, community therapeutic programming focused on areas impacted by gun violence, leadership classes, mentoring, employment readiness programs, workforce development, reentry case management, and tutoring. The Misdemeanor Program provides employment-focused alternatives-to-incarceration for youth up to age 24 facing 6–12 months on Rikers Island. The BronxConnect and ManhattanConnect ATI program is for young people ages 13–27 who reside in the Bronx or Manhattan with an open case in any of the five boroughs of NYC.

**CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING AND
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (CASES)—EDUCATION, CAREER
& ENRICHMENT (ECE)**

151 Lawrence Street, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201**Telephone: 212.553.6300**www.cases.org

Programs serving youth and young adults ages 12–27 offering mentoring, case management, job training, paid internships and summer employment, high school equivalency (HSE) classes and testing, individual and family therapy, mental health counseling, and recreational activities. Visit the website for specific program information and eligibility.

**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES (CCA)—YOUTH
SERVICES NYC**

25 Chapel Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 718.858.9658

<https://communityalternatives.org>

Provides services to youth, both court-involved and non-court-involved, including case management, financial literacy and life skills workshops, civic engagement opportunities, community benefits projects, internships, unsubsidized job placements, and mentoring. Visit the website for more information and requirements.

THE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE



<https://childrensvillage.org>

400 East Fordham Road, 6th Floor, Bronx, NY 10458

Telephone: 718.220.4700

2139 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.932.9009

Provides services including residential treatment centers, shelters for undocumented children, foster homes, mom/baby boarding homes, runaway/homeless shelters, foster care related services, residential programs, community centers, after-school programs, mentoring initiatives for court-involved youth, and daycare to children and teens.

YOUTH

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ELITE LEARNERS—REENTRY SERVICES



Headquarters: 4517 Avenue D, Brooklyn, NY 11203

Telephone: 347.742.7913

www.elitelearners.org

Anti-Violence Hub: 581 Rogers Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226

Brownsville Office: 106 New Lots Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11212

Offers support services to youth where mentees receive one-to-one case management, general issue advocacy training, as well as wrap-around family support. Support services include job-

readiness skill building, job placement, workshop trainings such as computer literacy, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, housing connections, mental health counseling, and more. Also provides referrals for court advocacy and support services.

EXALT YOUTH

17 Battery Place, Suite 307, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 347.621.6100

www.exaltyouth.org

A professional and educational paid internship program for court-involved youth ages 15–19 of all gender identities who do not have a high school diploma. The program involves six weeks of pre-internship training classes (weeks five and six paid), an eight weeks paid internship, and a paid two weeks post-internship class. After completion of the program, young people remain involved as a part of the alumni network, which can provide services for court and for school. Individuals can be referred by the court system, or be self-referred. Participants must have a Social Security number. Works with youth in Close to Home facilities.

EXODUS TRANSITIONAL COMMUNITY

2268 3rd Avenue, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 917.492.0990

www.etcny.org

Provides case management, mentoring sessions, education and career planning, and employment and education opportunities for young people ages 16–24. Offers workshops that focus on health and trauma, leadership development, civic engagement and education, and career exploration.

GETTING OUT AND STAYING OUT (GOSO)

201A East 124th Street, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 212.831.5020

Mailing Address: PO Box 1168, New York, NY 10035

A reentry program for youth ages 16–24 focused on education, employment, and emotional well-being through mental health and social services. Services include supportive counseling, educational support, vocational training, and workforce development. During sign-up, staff determine immediate housing, counseling, and treatment needs, and provide technology such as phones to those who need them to stay in contact with service providers. Referrals are provided to mental health services, substance use disorder treatment, anger management services, and emergency housing if needed.

GIRL VOW  

509 Willis Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458

Telephone: 833.444.7586

<https://girlvow.org>

Mailing Address: PO Box 843, Bronx, NY 10458

Provides services within secure and non-secure facilities, foster care agencies, and for homeless LGBTQ+ and underserved youth. Programs include, but are not limited to, mentoring, workshops, virtual programming, crisis intervention, advocacy, court support, alternatives to incarceration, child welfare, leadership, runaway services, mental health support, stipends, and aftercare assistance. Workshops focus on life skills training, physical and mental health, social-emotional development, self-worth, and education services. Provides referrals on a case-by-case basis for youth ages 12–24. Offers programming on Rikers Island called Beyond the Limit for those ages 25 and over, including specialized life coaching. No walk-ins, appointments only.

HOW OUR LIVES LINK ALTOGETHER (H.O.L.L.A!)

365 5th Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016

<https://healwithholla.com>

Conducts youth organizing training programs designed to build capacity for critical social analysis, community organizing, and healing. Programming includes an LGBTQI+ retreat center, political education, intersectional healing, and community organizing skill-building.

OSBORNE ASSOCIATION



Provides support, services, and resources to children with a currently or formerly incarcerated parent or parental figure. Services include individualized planning and support, monthly recreational activities, video visiting, prison day trips, a leadership program, and weekly group workshops. Priority is given to children of parents currently enrolled in, or graduated from, one or more of Osborne's programs.

See the full listing for Osborne Association on [page 34](#).

POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE (PAL)—JUVENILE JUSTICE

www.palnyc.org

2588 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11207

Telephone: 718.342.3902 or 917.232.0825

441 Manhattan Avenue, New York, NY 10026

Telephone: 212.665.8699 x215 or 646.565.8253

The Brooklyn location offers the Mentorship and Advocacy Program (MAAP) for court-involved and underserved youth ages 12–21, where participants are matched with a mentor after a referral from either the Juvenile Justice Initiative (JJI), Close to Home, or the Family Assistance Program (FAP). The Harlem location offers Teen Programming that provides counseling, tutoring, and other support to underserved youth ages 13–19.

POSSIBILITY PROJECT—YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAM



377 5th Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016

Telephone: 212.924.2300

www.the-possibility-project.org

A performing arts program open to NYC youth ages 15–21 who are or who have been involved in the legal system. Participants meet virtually Mondays and Wednesdays during after-school hours from August through December. Recruitment occurs in July and August. Visit the website for more information.

YOUTH JUSTICE NETWORK

www.youthjustice.org

Main Office—Harlem

63 West 125th Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.760.0755

Bronx Office

424 East 147th Street, Suite 200, Bronx, NY 10455

Telephone: 718.653.5301 or 929.245.6136

Brooklyn Office

25 Chapel Street, Suite 1206, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 347.689.4771

Family Matters Office

60 Lafayette Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 212.442.2903

A community-based organization that serves young people ages 16–24 including those who have been to jail, are on probation, or are otherwise court-involved. Each member who joins is paired with a youth advocate who serves as a counselor, mentor, and coach. Interactions begin while youth are still incarcerated and continue into the community. Other services include youth advocacy and mentorship, defender-based court advocacy, leadership

training, alternative education including HSE preparation, career services, and arts and recreation. Also offers fatherhood programs for both young men (under age 25) and adults (ages 25 and over), and a mentoring program for young mothers.

YOUTH REPRESENT

11 Park Place, Suite 1512, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 646.759.8080 / Legal Hotline: 646.759.8088

<https://youthrepresent.org>

Provides free comprehensive legal services to low-income NYC youth ages 26 and under, especially system-impacted youth. Services include representing youth who are denied jobs or vocational licenses due to their conviction record, kicked out of or denied public housing, or facing school suspensions. Criminal representation includes summonses, bench warrants, or low-level misdemeanors; Family Court representation includes child support, visitation, and custody matters. Will obtain RAP sheets and provide counsel to clients for job interviews, landlords, and colleges, and will fix any errors on conviction histories.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Telephone: 718.968.7275


www.bklynlibrary.org/kids

Offers a range of materials and programs for young people, birth through teens, and their families and educators. Programs include Babies and Books; Storytime; Ready, Set, Kindergarten!; STEM programs; Inclusive Services programs for children and teens with and without disabilities; and more. Many locations offer free Homework Help provided by trained volunteer tutors.

**NYC ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
(ACS)—JUVENILE JUSTICE**   

Main Office: 150 William Street, New York, NY 10038
Office of Advocacy Helpline: 212.676.9421
Collect: 212.619.1309 or 212.341.3322
www.nyc.gov/site/acs/justice/juvenile-justice.page

Provides a wide range of services including prevention programs, alternative-to-detention programs, and placement services for young New Yorkers. A list of borough locations can be found online at www.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/borough-locations.page.

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT (DYCD)** 

2 Lafayette Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007
Telephone: 800.246.4646
www.nyc.gov/dycd

Offers a wide range of programs for NYC youth including after-school, community development, family support, literary services, youth services, youth workshop development, internships, and job placement. Services include vocational training, HSE preparation, and assistance with finding jobs and shelter.

NYC HEALTH—NYC TEENSPACE

www.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/teenspace.page

A free mental health support program available to any teenager ages 13–17 living in NYC, regardless of school, income level, or insurance status, powered by Talkspace.

To sign up, teens need to visit the website to enter their address and birthday, a parent or guardian's information and email address so they can provide consent, and an online assessment must be completed.

Teens are matched with a licensed New York therapist. Therapy takes place primarily through messaging on the Talkspace platform. Teens can message their therapist as much as they like and the therapist will reply five days per week. A once a month 30-minute live virtual session, via video or audio, is also available.

If a teen turns 18 while enrolled in the program, they can continue with their therapist until June 30 of the following year. Then, if they choose to continue, they can pay with insurance or out-of-pocket.

ALI FORNEY CENTER (AFC)

Headquarters

307 West 38th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.222.3427 x300

www.aliforneycenter.org

Drop-In Center

307 West 38th Street, 3rd Floor New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.206.0574 x100

Provides emergency housing and services to LGBTQI+ youth experiencing homelessness. Offers a drop-in program that provides case management, food, clothes and hygiene products, job search assistance, and referrals to medical care and mental health services. Also offers transitional housing, ongoing supportive group therapy and support groups, and employment and education assistance. Clients seeking housing or long-term services should call the drop-in center and provide their information to be placed on an intake waitlist and paired with an intake coordinator.

COVENANT HOUSE NEW YORK

Intake and Crisis Shelter

460 West 41st Street, New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212.613.0300

<https://ny.covenanthouse.org>

A 24-hour multiservice walk-in center and shelter for young adults

ages 16–21 experiencing homelessness. Services include crisis care, shelter, transitional living, healthcare, job-readiness training, educational support, legal services, street outreach, and aftercare. Residential programs are for young adults up to 24 years old. The Health and Wellness Center provides young people with access to comprehensive medical care and referrals; call **212.613.0315** for more information and operating hours.

THE DOOR

555 Broome Street, New York, NY 10013
Telephone: 212.941.9090
www.door.org

Mailing Address
121 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013

Provides a wide range of services for young people in NYC ages 12–24 with youth centers in the Bronx and Manhattan, including healthcare and mental health counseling, HSE/GED classes, college preparation, career development, training and job placement, legal services, and arts and recreation. Must be a member to access services. Membership is free and applicants do not need to bring anything with them. For information about getting connected to services email membership@door.org.

YOUTH

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GENERATION NYC

<https://growingupnyc.cityofnewyork.us>

An online platform with resources and support for NYC teens and young adults. Provides easy-to-read information on many subjects including school, work, budgeting, counseling, voting, housing, health, and more.

GIRLS EDUCATIONAL AND MENTORING SERVICES (GEMS)



Mailing Address: PO Box 899, New York, NY 10039

Telephone: 917.837.0357

www.gems-girls.org

Provides counseling, therapeutic and recreational groups, referrals to housing, legal and educational resources, transitional housing, court advocacy, and peer mentoring for girls and women ages 12–29 who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and/or domestic trafficking. Call or email rlloydasst@gems-girls.org for more information.

HETRICK-MARTIN INSTITUTE (HMI)

2 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003

Telephone: 212.674.2400

<https://hmi.org>

Provides free year-round programs and services for LGBTQIA+ youth ages 13–24 and their families. Services include adult education, behavioral health, case management and service coordination, employment assistance, health information and support, HSE classes and testing, HIV/AIDS services, meals, family and group counseling, services for homeless youth, and more.

LOVE IS RESPECT

PO Box 90249, Austin, TX 78709

Telephone: 866.331.9474

www.loveisrespect.org

Offers confidential support for teens, young adults, and their loved ones seeking help, resources, or information related to healthy relationships and dating abuse. Call or text “LOVEIS” to **22522**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

SAFE HORIZON—STREETWORK PROJECT DROP-IN CENTERS

Hotline: 800.708.6600

www.safehorizon.org/streetwork

Harlem Drop-In Center

209 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.695.2220

Lower East Side Drop-In Center

33 Essex Street, New York, NY 10002

Telephone: 646.602.6404

Operates drop-in centers which provide free services to homeless youth up to age 25, including emergency services such as crisis housing, hot meals, showers, clothing, medical services, legal assistance, individual and group counseling, HIV prevention materials and testing, and assistance obtaining public benefits including Medicaid. Intake is required. Call or visit the website to find information on services and operating hours.

THE TREVOR PROJECT

PO Box 69232, West Hollywood, CA 90069

Lifeline: 866.488.7386

www.thetrevorproject.org

A national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQI+ young people. The lifeline for immediate help is free, confidential, and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TrevorSpace is an online communication platform for international LGBTQI+ young people ages 13–24.

UNFRIEND THE NYPD

<https://welcometocup.org/projects/unfriend-the-nypd>

A project created by the Surveillance Technology Oversight Project

(S.T.O.P.), the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), and the Youth Design Center (YDC). The booklet is for youth and young adults and explains how the police can surveil phones through messenger apps, social media, and geofences, and offers protection tips. It also explains the concept of a risk profile, or how likely a person is to be surveilled by police. There is also a video series. Visit the website to download a free copy.

WHATSOK

Helpline: 844.942.8765

www.whatsok.org

A website and helpline that offers confidential support and resources for information about safe sexual behaviors for teens and young adults ages 14–21. The helpline is available Mon 12pm–8pm; Tue, Wed, and Fri 12pm–6pm; Thu 10am–6pm; and Sat 3pm–6pm.

Working Papers

All New York City public school students ages 14–17 must have working papers in order to apply for a job. Those in school can ask their guidance office for a working papers application. Those not enrolled in school can go to the nearest high school and ask for an application. They are required by law to provide you with one. During school vacation periods, offices stay open part-time to issue working papers. For more information visit www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/working-papers.

Foster Care & Social Security Benefits

Youth who are in foster care may be entitled to Social Security benefits. The Marshall Project created a guide to help current and former foster youth and their advocates determine whether

the government has withheld money owed, and if so, how to get it back, available at www.themarshallproject.org/2021/04/22/were-you-ever-in-foster-care-here-s-how-to-find-out-if-the-government-took-your-money.

Parents & Caregivers

“WHAT IS THERE BEYOND THE SKY?” I ASKED MY MOTHER.

‘PARADISE.’

‘WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?’

‘LIKE CHILDREN’S DREAMS.’

— AYA RABAH, SCARS



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY RONALD BROWN

Organizations & Resources

THE CHILD CENTER OF NY   

118-35 Queens Blvd., 6th Floor, Forest Hills, NY 11375



Telephone: 718.651.7770

<https://childcenterny.org>

Offers a range of programs for children and families in locations throughout NYC. Services include individual and family counseling and substance use disorder treatment for young people and adults; perinatal mental health services and early childhood mental health services for families with children ages 0–5; and early childhood education programs including Head Start centers, home-based Early Head Start programs, and the ParentChild+ home-based literacy program, as well as after school and enrichment programs for youth ages 5–24 in Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan. The Jamaica Family Wellness Center offers programming for court-involved youth as well as JobNet services for youth with a mental health diagnosis. The organization also offers Health Homes and other home-based crisis intervention services. In Brooklyn, the Child Center Residential Treatment Facility provides comprehensive psychiatric treatment and education services for youth ages 12–18 who have had multiple unsuccessful psychiatric hospital placements or involvement with the juvenile court system and demonstrating serious emotional disabilities. The Benefits Access program helps families enroll in entitlement benefits, health insurance enrollment, and referrals for financial and legal assistance.

PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

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CHILDREN OF PROMISE, NYC (CPNYC)  

www.cpnyc.org

1842 Webster Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457

Telephone: 718.400.9290

54 MacDonough Street, Brooklyn, NY 11216

Telephone: 718.483.9290

Provides an after-school program, a summer day camp, a mentoring initiative, a licensed mental health clinic, and family engagement services for children of incarcerated parents ages 6–17. Incarcerated people can write to either address attention to Founder and President; please be aware response time may be long.

CHILDREN'S AID

117 West 124th Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.949.4800

www.childrensaidnyc.org

Provides services and support to children, youth, and their families in targeted high-need NYC neighborhoods. Services include adoption and foster care, education, school-based and community health clinics, Head Start classes, after-school/weekend/summer programs, substance use and teen pregnancy prevention, parenting programs, and emergency assistance. Also provides reentry programs for youth in the Bronx and Manhattan. Participants receive reentry plans and employment readiness.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS FOR YOUTH (CCFY)—PARENT PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

369 East 149th Street, 7th Floor, Bronx, NY 10455

Telephone: 347.590.0940

<https://cc-fy.org>

Provides parents of court-involved youth with peer coaches to help guide them through their child's involvement in the juvenile court system. Peer coaches connect families to parent support groups and family strengthening programming. Peer coaches are also available on call to support parents in crisis situations. The South Bronx Community Connections program partners with local community-based organizations to create new options for alternatives to formal court processing.

HOUR CHILDREN

36-11 12th Street, Long Island City, NY 11106**Telephone: 718.433.4724**<https://hourchildren.org>

Provides comprehensive services to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their families. Community-based programs include transitional and permanent supportive housing, a comprehensive employment training and placement program, case management and therapeutic services, pre- and post-release adult mentoring, and mentoring for children with incarcerated parents. Provides an after school clubhouse, teen program, two thrift shops, and a community food pantry. Programming provided at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility and Taconic Correctional Facility includes transportation and visitation services, parenting education, mental health support for women, advocacy, and a residential nursery unit. Also facilitates family visiting and reentry services for incarcerated women at RMSC on Rikers Island.

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OF THE INCARCERATED

<https://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu>

348 An online directory of programs for children, parents, and families of people who are incarcerated. Informational materials, fact sheets, and research resources for service providers and families are also available.

OSBORNE ASSOCIATION

Provides a range of workshops and services including a healthy relationships workshop and support groups for caregivers and adults who have an incarcerated loved one; reentry services and case management for women returning from prison; video visiting; and youth development workshops, recreation, and peer support for children of incarcerated parents.

See the full listing for Osborne Association on [page 34](#).

SINGLE PARENT RESOURCE CENTER

228 East 45th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 212.951.7030

www.singleparentusa.com

Provides programs for single parents and their families. Services are available to support all single parents, including those who are living in transitional housing, living with a substance use disorder, or have been recently incarcerated.

NYC PUBLIC LIBRARIES—CULTURE PASS

www.culturepass.nyc

The New York Public Library (Bronx, Manhattan, Staten Island)

Telephone: 917.275.6975

Brooklyn Public Library

Telephone: 718.968.7275

Queens Public Library

Telephone: 718.990.0700

A program for NYC public library cardholders ages 13 and over. By using a library card, New Yorkers can reserve a pass and get free admission to partnering NYC cultural institutions including museums, historical societies, heritage centers, public gardens, and more. Patrons can reserve one pass per cultural institution per calendar year and can have four active reservations per library card. Visit the website for information on reservations and participating organizations.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—FAMILY & CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

Telephone: 917.275.6975

www.nypl.org/events

Offers free programs, classes, and events for children and teens. Programs include story hours for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children, science and art workshops for children of all ages, homework help and tutoring, musical performances, and more. Also offers cultural programs including lectures, concerts, films, exhibitions, and author talks. Call or visit the website to find programs and how to sign up.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—JUSTICE INITIATIVES—TELESTORY

www.bklynlibrary.org/outreach/justice-initiatives/telestory

The TeleStory program connects families with loved ones incarcerated in 10 NYS DOCCS facilities through free one-hour video calls. Video calls are available at 11 Brooklyn Public Library branches, where families can also access a range of library resources and support. For more information, including details on participating branches and NY State DOCCS facilities, or to start the process and submit a request to the DOCCS facility, call or text **718.916.9408** or visit the website.

NYS COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (CCF)—HELP HUB FOR FAMILIES

<https://helphubforfamilies.ny.gov>

An online resource for finding information and resources for mental health, behavioral health, education, human services, disability, and more for newborns through age 22.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DOE)—INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS

Telephone: **718.935.2009** or **311**

www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/infant-and-toddler



Offers free or low-cost early childhood education infant and toddler programs for qualifying families with children between six weeks and three-years-old (who are not yet age-eligible for 3K). Includes education, health, nutrition, and social services. Must be income and family-size eligible. Offers sliding scale fees.

NYC DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING—GRANDPARENT RESOURCE CENTER 

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/dfta/about/contact-the-department-for-the-aging.page

Provides information and assistance to people who are raising grandchildren and other young relatives. Individuals should call to find out about financial and health benefits they and their families may be entitled to, as well as information on adoption and child-custody options and how to negotiate the aging and child welfare systems.

NYC MAYOR’S OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE—FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS (FJC)  

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/ocdv/programs/family-justice-centers.page

198 East 161st Street, 2nd Floor, Bronx, NY 10451

Telephone: 718.508.1220

350 Jay Street, 15th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 718.250.5113

80 Centre Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 212.602.2800

126-02 82nd Avenue, Kew Gardens, NY 11415

Telephone: 718.575.4545

126 Stuyvesant Place, Staten Island, NY 10301

Telephone: 718.697.4300

Provides free and confidential legal, counseling, and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence, gender-based violence, elder abuse, and sex trafficking, with immediate assistance for victims of domestic violence, regardless of language, immigration, or economic status.

**NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)—
STATE CENTRAL REGISTRY PROJECT** 

Volunteer attorneys, law graduates, and law students provide counsel and representation to individuals who have been wrongfully or unfairly placed on the New York State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment and seek to have their reports on the Register amended and/or sealed.

See the full listing for NYCLA on [page 206](#).

NEW YORK FOUNDLING  

590 6th Avenue, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.633.9300

www.nyfoundling.org

Provides foster care, educational programs, mental health services, and many other community-based services for children, families, and adults. Services for court-involved youth include intervention, alternatives-to-incarceration, and reentry services. Has a mental health clinic for youth and families with services for children ages 18 and under who are struggling with family conflict, truancy, depression, anger, anxiety, trouble focusing, substance use, peer issues, and court involvement. Conducts telehealth sessions to address medical and mental health needs. Parents receive counseling, case planning, referrals, diapers, formula, emergency support for food, and aftercare. Offices are available in every borough.

SAFE HORIZON

2 Lafayette Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.577.7700

www.safehorizon.org

Domestic Violence Hotline: 800.621.4673

Rape and Sexual Assault Hotline: 212.227.3000

Crime Victims: 866.689.4357

Provides support for victims of crime and abuse. Offers assistance including shelter, advocacy, counseling, legal services, supervised visitation, Know Your Rights training, and more. Programs welcome women, men, transgender, and GNC survivors of all ages, backgrounds, and immigration status.

SANCTUARY FOR FAMILIES

PO Box 1406, Wall Street Station, New York, NY 10268

Telephone: 212.349.6009

<https://sanctuaryforfamilies.org>

A service provider and advocate for survivors of domestic violence, sex trafficking, and related forms of gender violence. Culturally sensitive counseling and crisis services are offered in multiple languages and include individual counseling, group counseling, case management, crisis intervention, and a mentor program. Legal services offered include access to legal representation for adults and children. Shelter services are available for women, men, and families escaping abusers, including access to confidentially located and secure shelters. A career readiness and technology training program is available. Children and youth services include individual, family, and group counseling; educational advocacy and tutoring; childcare and children's activity groups; and parenting support.

Partners with NYC Health + Hospitals–Gouverneur to provide the EMPOWER Center, a comprehensive health center for people in the sex trade. The anti-trafficking initiative provides survivors of sex

trafficking with a range of resources including legal services, counseling, and case management. Telehealth services are available.

SCO FAMILY OF SERVICES   

Telephone: 516.671.1253

Foster Care Emergency Assistance Hotline: 718.674.7800

<https://sco.org>

Provides a range of services to children, families, and adults. Services for court-involved youth and young adults include therapeutic, educational, vocational, and supportive services for young adults on Rikers Island prior to and after release; Multi-Systemic Therapy for youth involved in the criminal legal system; and a residential program for youth, including those with developmental disabilities, that provides counseling, structure, education, skill-building, and connection to family, as an alternative to incarceration. Services for children include childcare, early childhood education centers, foster care, nurse home visits for first time mothers, and summer and after-school programs. Services for teens include specialized schools for teens with special needs, developmental disabilities, or who are under-credited and over-age, as well as help with college, career preparation, and employment and life skills development. Family and community services include counseling, mental health, community centers, education, employment, shelters, and substance use treatment. Visit the website for locations and services.

UNITED ACTIVITIES UNLIMITED (UAU)—FATHERHOOD MATTERS  

400 Victory Blvd., Suite C, Staten Island, NY 10310

Telephone: 718.448.5151

www.uaufatherhoodmatters.org

A program for noncustodial fathers offering a 10-week fatherhood engagement workshop series. Provides case managers to assist and help with navigating child support or public benefits, finding and sustaining employment, and arranging child visitation. Also

offers continued support to those who have completed the certificate program. Provides support related to anger management and Abusive Partner Intervention Program (APIP). For more information call or email fatherhood@unitedactivities.org.

WIN NYC

1 State Street Plaza, 18th Floor, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 212.695.4758

<https://winnyc.org>

Provides shelter and supportive services for women with children in NYC. Services include job-readiness training, survival skills, HSE and ESOL classes, and computer training. All placements into family shelters are made through the Prevention Assistance and Temporary Housing office (PATH) of the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), and referrals are required. No walk-ins accepted



Custody Rights for Incarcerated Parents

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is a New York City agency with the stated purpose of protecting children and with the power to remove children from their parents in cases of abuse or neglect.

Incarcerated parents are at a much higher risk of being investigated by ACS, so every incarcerated parent should understand how ACS's process for supervising and removing children works, and what they can do to prevent that from happening.

Find out if there's an ACS case involving your children

- Contact a lawyer for help finding out if there is a Family Court case involving your family.
- If you have a case, contact Family Court and ask to have a lawyer assigned to represent you.
- Contact ACS directly to find out the status of your case, to propose a family member or friend who could care for your

children, to ask for a service plan, or to ask for visits with your children.

- Be careful what information you provide ACS since anything you say can be used against you. If you can, talk with a lawyer before speaking with ACS.

Make a plan with family members or friends who can care for your children

- Give their names and contact information to your lawyer and the ACS caseworkers.
- Your lawyer can fight for your children to live with a family member or friend instead of being placed with strangers. This will help keep ACS from getting involved in the first place and will give you better options during the process if ACS does get involved.

Maintaining contact with your children is important

- You have to show you are staying involved in your children's lives to help keep your rights as a parent.
- You should stay in touch with your children however you can, including visits, phone calls, videos, photos, letters, cards, etc.—as long as there is no court order prohibiting contact with your children.
- **The Children of Incarcerated Parents Program (CHIPP)** may be able to help bring your children to see you regularly: **212.341.3322**
- **Osborne Association** offers televisiting for some facilities: **718.637.6560**

Stay in touch with ACS and keep records of everything

- Keeping a written record of any visits with your children may help you prove your case in court. Get written proof of any services you attend, communication with ACS or the foster care agency, and any child support payments you make.
- The foster care agency has to prove they worked with you to set up visits with your children, so make sure you keep a record of any time you contacted the agency or ACS to set up a visit.

Be careful about what you say to ACS and the foster care agency

- Do not discuss any aspect of your legal case with ACS or foster

care agency caseworkers without speaking with your lawyer first.

- Get professional help when dealing with ACS (like a public defender, hired lawyer, or nonprofit agency).
- Do not say anything regarding your mental health, criminal case, substance use, or domestic violence—these statements are admissions that could be used against you in court.

You have the right to make educational and medical decisions for your children

- Even if your children are in foster care, you have the right to make medical and educational decisions for your children as long as your parental rights have not been terminated.
- Contact your children’s schools and medical offices and ask them to send you updates on educational conferences or medical appointments, and the well-being and performance of your children.

You have the right to be present at any court date involving your children

- This is called “being produced.”
- Contact Family Court and ACS to find out about any upcoming court dates.
- Send a request to Family Court for an order to be produced.
- State prisons will usually transport you to court.
- Federal prisons will usually set you up on a phone or video call.
- Get help from legal advocates to set this up.

This content is adapted from *What Do Incarcerated Parents Need to Know About ACS?*, a guide created in collaboration with the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), The Bronx Defenders, Brooklyn Defender Services, and Manuel Miranda Practice. A PDF version is online at <https://yourfamilyyourrights.org/get-informed>.

CENTER FOR FAMILY REPRESENTATION (CFR) 

Telephone: 212.691.0950
<https://cfrny.org>

Administrative and Manhattan Office

40 Worth Street, Suite 605, New York, NY 10013

Bronx Office

190 East 162nd Street, Bronx, NY 10451

Queens Community Office

89-14 Parsons Blvd., Floor 2, Jamaica, NY 11432

Provides families in crisis with free legal assistance and social work services to enable children to stay with their parents safely. A family defense team includes an attorney, a social worker, and a parent advocate. Families on Staten Island can contact the Manhattan Office for services.

FAMILY LEGAL CARE  

Family Law Helpline: 212.343.1122

<https://familylegalcare.org>

A nonprofit organization that provides free legal information and advice about NYS family law and Family Court, including issues of child support, custody, and visitation. Visit the website to access multilingual legal resource guides on topics including child support, custody, visitation, service, how to start a court case, and more. Accepts collect calls from incarcerated parents. Does not provide full legal representation. Call the helpline for information and to connect to programs.

**NYC ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
(ACS)—OFFICE OF ADVOCACY**  

150 William Street, 1st Floor, New York, NY 10038

Helpline: 212.676.9421 / Collect: 212.619.1309

TTY: 212.442.1447

www.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/advocacy.page

Provides information about rights to parents who have had to place a child in foster care while incarcerated. Incarcerated parents may call the collect line.

Child Support

Anyone who has a child support order is obligated to pay child support, even those who are currently incarcerated. Child support orders are based on the information available at the time of the hearing. Unpaid child support adds up and becomes debt called arrears. Arrears never go away, even after your child turns 21.

Either parent has the right to file a petition in Family Court to modify (change) the amount of the child support order if there is a substantial change in circumstances or the needs of the child are not being met. You can find the address for each borough's Family Court on [page 361](#).

In New York State, child support orders prior to October 13, 2010 treat incarceration as "voluntary unemployment" and typically may not be modified. For orders issued on or after October 13, 2010, incarcerated parents may file a modification petition due to a substantial change in circumstances, as long as their incarceration is not due to non-payment of child support, or an offense against the custodial parent or child.

The determination of whether a court will agree to a child support modification during a parent's incarceration is the judge's decision. Only a judge can change or modify a child support order. A court may decide that the child support payments should remain the same during a parent's incarceration.

Family Legal Care created a guide called *Family Court Basics for Parents Who Were Previously Incarcerated* available at <https://familylegalcare.org/guide/family-court-basics-for-parents-who-were-previously-incarcerated>. The guide answers questions that formerly incarcerated parents may have about paternity, child support, custody, visitation, and more.

Look up Child Support in the index to find more organizations that offer help navigating child support.

NYS OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE—CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

Child Support Helpline: 888.208.4485 / TTY: 866.875.9975
<https://childsupport.ny.gov>

The Child Support Helpline is available Mon–Fri 8am–7pm.

Custodial Parents

Provides custodial parents with assistance in obtaining financial support and medical insurance coverage for their children by locating parents, establishing paternity, establishing support orders, and collecting and distributing child support payments. The application to apply for child support services is available on the website.

Noncustodial Parents

Provides noncustodial parents with information on making payments, checking payment history, petitioning for a downward modification, what to do if your situation has changed (job, health insurance, custody), and benefits for working parents.

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)— OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES (OCSS)

Child Support Helpline: 888.208.4485 (Mon–Fri 8am–7pm)
www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/child-support-services.page

Customer Services Walk-In Center (Mon–Fri 8am–6pm)
151 West Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10013

Mailing Address

OCSS, PO Box 830, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013

Provides a range of services for custodial and noncustodial parents in NYC. Visit the website for forms, brochures, and other information.

Custodial Parents/Guardians

Provides custodial parents/guardians help with applying for child support, locating the other parent, establishing paternity (legal

fatherhood), establishing child support and medical support orders, collecting and distributing support payments, enforcement of child support orders, and more. Other services include account information, change of address, child support calculator, free financial counseling, and mediation services.

Noncustodial Parents

Provides noncustodial parents help with suspended driver's licenses or professional licenses, lowering or even eliminating child support debt owed to the government, changing an existing child support order, referrals to employment programs, paying current or past-due child support using a credit card, and more. Other services include account information, DNA testing, establishing paternity, free financial counseling, making payments, and mediation services.

Provides programs for noncustodial parents to reduce child support orders and arrears owed. Contact for more information on program eligibility and applications.

OCSS Locations

Bronx

Bronx Borough Office: 894 Garrison Avenue, Bronx, NY 10474

Bronx Family Court: 900 Sheridan Avenue, LM Floor, Bronx, NY 10451

Brooklyn

Brooklyn Borough Office: 1 MetroTech Center North, 6th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Kings County Family Court: 330 Jay Street, 12th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Manhattan

Manhattan/Staten Island Borough Office: 115 Chrystie Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10002

Manhattan Family Court: 60 Lafayette Street, 1st Floor, New York, NY 10013

Queens

Queens Borough Office: 165-08 88th Avenue, 6th Floor, Jamaica, NY 11432

Queens Family Court: 151-20 Jamaica Avenue, 4th Floor, Queens, NY 11432

Staten Island

Manhattan/Staten Island Borough Office: 115 Chrystie Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10002

Richmond County Family Court: 18 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, NY 10301

CHILD FIND OF AMERICA—PARENT HELP

Hotline: 800.716.3468

<https://childfindofamerica.org/services/parent-help>

Provides free and confidential services for parents living apart, including visitation/custody mediation over the phone, help with understanding legal options, and learning how to navigate the court and support systems.

COMMUNITY MEDIATION SERVICES (CMS)

89-64 163rd Street, Jamaica, NY 11432

Telephone: 718.523.6868

<https://mediatenyc.org>

Provides a network of mediation and conflict resolution programs to individuals, youth, and families in NYC. Visitation/custody and divorce mediation offered on a sliding fee scale. Other services include court diversion programs, therapeutic interventions, specialized educational programs, and school-based services.

NEW YORK PEACE INSTITUTE

111 John Street, Suite 600, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.577.1740

<https://nypeace.org>

Provides free visitation/custody mediation. Contact directly for

child support mediation. Visit the website for updated information on the Brooklyn location.

Additional Hotlines & Directories

NYS CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES ABUSE HOTLINE

Hotline: 800.342.3720 / TTY: 800.638.5163

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/cps>

Call to report child abuse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

NYS DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE HOTLINE

Hotline: 800.942.6906

<https://opdv.ny.gov/survivors-victims>

Provides referrals to local services. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

NYC HEALTH—CHILD CARE

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/child-care.page

Call or visit the website for information on childcare options in NYC.

ACS CONNECTME

<https://acsconnectme.nyc.gov>

An online directory for youth and families served by ACS in NYC. Searchable by zip code, resources include parenting support, public assistance, education, employment, health, legal services, mental health, and recreation.

GROWING UP NYC

<https://growingupnyc.cityofnewyork.us>

Offers information on programs, resources, and activities for children throughout NYC provided by government agencies and community partners. Lists program descriptions, eligibility requirements, and information on how to apply.

NATIONAL PARENT & YOUTH HELPLINE

Helpline: 855.427.2736

<https://nationalparentyouthhelpline.org>

Provides emotional support and advocacy for parents and caregivers to youth of all ages.

The Job Search

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INSTEAD OF THE CONSERVATIVE MOTTO, “A FAIR DAY’S WAGE FOR A FAIR DAY’S WORK,” WE MUST INSCRIBE ON OUR BANNER THE REVOLUTIONARY WATCHWORD, “ABOLITION OF THE WAGE SYSTEM.”

— CONSTITUTION OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY DANIEL MALAK

Job Search Assistance & Placement

BRONXWORKS

Telephone: 646.393.4000

Workforce Development: 718.993.8880

<https://bronxworks.org>

Offers workforce development programs and services including job training, job placement, referrals, financial education, and benefits assistance for adults ages 18 and over. Also provides children and youth programs, family programs, services for seniors, immigration services, eviction prevention, homeless services, programs for food insecurity and nutrition education, and help for people living with chronic illnesses. Services are provided in locations throughout the Bronx. Call or visit the website for more information on programs, eligibility, and locations of services.

CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (CEO)



Offers eligible individuals just coming home from prison immediate paid employment, skills training, and ongoing career support.

See the full listing for CEO on [page 27](#).

DEFY VENTURES

Telephone: 800.680.6343

www.defyventures.org

Runs a free, virtual 17-week Entrepreneurship Bootcamp program twice per year. The program coaches formerly incarcerated individuals, stable in their reentry, on how to launch and grow a for-profit business along with personal and professional development. Email info@defyventures.org for more information.

THE DOE FUND—READY, WILLING & ABLE

Administration Office

345 East 102nd Street, Suite 305, New York, NY 10029

Telephone: 212.628.5207

www.doe.org

Provides paid transitional work experience, transitional housing, and supportive services including personalized case management, legal services, job and housing placement support, workforce development, and vocational training for homeless and formerly incarcerated men. A homeless assessment number is required for the residential program. Clients must abstain from drugs and alcohol while in the program. Call for information on intake.

DRIVE CHANGE

Mailing Address: 630 Flushing Avenue, Mailbox 25, Brooklyn, NY 11206

www.drivechangenyc.org

A paid fellowship program for formerly incarcerated young people ages 18–25. Fellows train in the food and hospitality industry, and participate in workshops designed to develop the skills needed to be successful within the industry. Visit the website for information on applications.

EXPONENTS



The Job Club is a multi-session job readiness and retention program providing skills-building in resume writing, interviewing, job searching, and soft skills. The Center for Personal & Professional Development provides scholarships for individuals interested in pursuing a career as a Recovery Coach (Certified Recovery Peer Advocate) or CASAC (Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counseling); trainings are conducted on-site.

See the full listing for Exponents on [page 30](#).

THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK (THE HORT)—HORTNYC (HORTICULTURE AND OPEN STREETS RESIDENT TRAINING IN NYC) 

148 West 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018
www.thehort.org

A transitional employment program providing paid employment and workforce development opportunities to New Yorkers of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities, looking to strengthen their employment skills and move forward with careers that support a sustainable green city. Partners with local public and private service providers for referrals including The Hope Program, Strive, GOSO, CEO, Youth Justice Network, and Fortune Society. People receiving services from other organizations and who are interested in the program can still contact for more information and to see if a partnership can be built.

Participation requires a referral from one of the affiliated partners. At this time, it does not accept direct applications from individuals. The program requires a willingness to work outdoors in all weather conditions, a strong interest in horticulture, and a positive work ethic. Please note that acceptance into the program is not guaranteed, as it involves a referral, application, and interview process.

Individuals who are currently incarcerated at Rikers Island or in an NYS correctional facility can send a letter of interest to the address listed above for more information. Formerly incarcerated people who are interested can send a letter of interest or email **Jobs@thehort.org** for more information.

NADAP  

355 Lexington Avenue, Floor 2, New York, NY 10017
Telephone: 212.986.1170
www.nadap.org

Offers employment services for individuals throughout NYC, with a focus on people who face barriers to employment primarily due histories of substance use and/or mental health disorders,

chronic medical issues, and/or long histories of unemployment. The Comprehensive Employment Services (CES) has three program options. The Career Pathways 3 (CP3) is a youth employment program for people ages 18–23. Individuals older than 23 must have an active Public Assistance case that includes a minor child under 18. The Alternatives to Incarceration is for people ages 18 and over with legal involvement including incarceration, probation/parole, conviction history, or current supervised release. The Comprehensive Employment Services is for people ages 18 and over with current or past participation in an OASAS-licensed treatment program. Also provides help with healthcare enrollment, referrals for people with substance use disorder, and home care coordination.

NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)— PROJECT RESTORE & STATE CENTRAL REGISTRY PROJECT

Project Restore provides free representation to individuals with conviction records who have been denied vocational licenses and who are challenging the denial. Advocacy includes representing license seekers in administrative law proceedings, appealing adverse Administrative Law Judge decisions to agency commissioners, and, when warranted, appealing commissioners' decisions to the New York State Supreme Court via Article 78 Petitions.

The State Central Registry Project provides counsel and representation from volunteer attorneys, law graduates, and law students to individuals who have been wrongfully or unfairly placed on the New York State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment and seek to have their reports on the Register amended and/or sealed.

See the full listing for NYCLA on [page 206](#).

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—CAREER SERVICES

www.nypl.org/education/adults/career-services

Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL)
455 5th Avenue, 5th & 6th Floors, New York, NY 10016
Telephone: 212.592.7006

Bronx Library Center
310 East Kingsbridge Road, 5th Floor, Bronx, NY 10455
Telephone: 212.592.7006

Career Services provides information on all aspects of career development. Services include career advice, job application support, resume or cover letter writing, confidence boosting strategies, and mock interview support. Offers virtual (Zoom and phone) and in-person support. Also holds workshops and webinars on resumes, interviews, networking, and more. Provides an updated list of job search and employment websites, which include resources such as job search databases, civil service exam study guides, resume and cover letter handbooks, and guidebooks. The Virtual Interview Room, at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL), is a dedicated space equipped with all the necessary technology, including a special desktop and webcam, for virtual interviews. Visit the website for more information, including on registration, walk-in hours, and making appointments.

The Career Coaching Support service offers feedback and suggested edits on resumes, insight on how to improve job search strategies, and defining career goals. The One-on-One Job Support service provides assistance with resumes and cover letters, online job searching and application, and connecting people to partner organizations that provide training and specialized assistance. Visit the website to schedule an appointment or email careerservices@nypl.org for more information.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—BUSINESS & CAREER SERVICES

10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238
Telephone: 718.968.7275
www.bklynlibrary.org/business

Offers programs and assistance related to job searching, finan-

cial literacy, and starting, running, and growing a business. Offers free one-on-one resume and career help (via drop-in sessions and email) and meetings with a Job Information Resource Librarian for feedback on a resume or cover letter, mock interviews, an overview of resources or programs to help with the job search, or to answer other job search-related questions. Also offers free access to Brainfuse JobNow, which provides real-time online coaching on resume writing and interviewing. Financial coaching by phone addresses concerns about debt and managing money. Additionally, the PowerUP! business plan competition awards up to \$20,000 annually to winning applicants to start a small business. Additional resource guides and tutorials are available online. Visit the website for more information on all events and services.

QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—JOB & BUSINESS ACADEMY (JBA)

89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432

Telephone: 718.990.8625

www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/job-business

Provides free specialized training and learning opportunities, with an emphasis on technology training, to job seekers, aspiring entrepreneurs, and business owners. Services are designed to build the skills needed to be better prepared for the modern workforce. Provides entrepreneurs with knowledge they can use to build and further develop their small business ideas.

Free workshops are offered on topics related to job search strategies, online technology and networking tools, work skills identification, job readiness (writing impactful resumes, mistake-free cover letters, and mock interviews), entrepreneurship and small business, and technology training (computer basics, and Microsoft Office).

Employment Counselors and Career Coaches are available upon request via email and provide help with job search questions and resume assistance. Assistance is available Mon–Fri, on a first-come, first-served basis. Call **718.990.8625** or email questions to jobsearchhelp@queenslibrary.org.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR—FEDERAL BONDING PROGRAM

<https://dol.ny.gov/federal-bonding-program-0>

For certain jobs, employers require that their employees be bonded. This is a type of insurance that protects the employer against any type of illegal activity by an employee (larceny, embezzlement, forgery). Because private insurance companies often do not bond people who have conviction records, the federal government has a federal bonding program that can bond an employee for up to \$25,000. An employer's commitment to hiring the applicant is required in advance. Visit the website to find local bonding coordinators.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES— WORKFORCE 1 (WF1) CAREER CENTERS

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/sbs/careers/virtual-wf1cc.page

Provides career counseling, resume and cover letter assistance, and job-placement services. Offers training programs in food service, healthcare, construction, media and entertainment, technology, and more. Job training grants are also available. Visit the website or call and ask for “Workforce 1” for more information.

NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)—JOBS-PLUS

<https://opportunitynycha.org/workforce-development/jobs-plus>

A workforce development and financial empowerment program for NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents. Serves the residents of 27 NYCHA developments by providing job-readiness assistance, vocational training, job placement and retention, financial counseling, and career planning services. If one's NYCHA development is not listed below, go to the nearest program site for referrals to resources.

Bronx

East Side House–201 St. Ann’s Avenue, Basement, Bronx, NY
10454

Serves: Mill Brook, Mill Brook Extension, Mitchel, and Mott Haven
Houses

Telephone: 718.304.0155

BronxWorks–550 East 142nd Street, Bronx, NY 10454

Serves: Betances, Moore, East 152nd Street/Courtlandt Ave, and
Melrose Houses; Clason Point Gardens, Monroe, Sack Wern, and
Soundview Houses

Telephone: 718.993.8880

Brooklyn

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation–630 Flushing Avenue,
2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11206

Serves: Armstrong I, Armstrong II, Lafayette, Marcy, and Tompkins
Houses

Telephone: 917.267.5575

America Works of New York–519 Rockaway Avenue, Brooklyn, NY
11212

Serves: Howard, Low, Glenmore Plaza, Garvey (Group A), and Hughes
Apartments Houses

Telephone: 718.576.1889

FEDCAP–330 Powell Street, Brooklyn, NY 11212

Serves: Brownsville, Van Dyke I, and Tilden Houses

Telephone: 212.727.4229

Manhattan

Henry Street Settlement–24 Avenue D, New York, NY 10009

Serves: Riis, Riis II, and Wald Houses

Telephone: 212.254.4333

Urban Upbound–335 East 111th Street, New York, NY 10029

Serves: Jefferson, Johnson, and Clinton Houses

Telephone: 718.269.6822

Queens

America Works of New York–33-20 55th Street, Suite 202,
Woodside, NY 11377

Serves: Woodside Houses
Telephone: 718.865.8556

Urban Upbound–4-25 Astoria Blvd., Astoria, NY 11102
Serves: Astoria Houses
Telephone: 718.204.2430 x221

Urban Upbound–10-38 41st Avenue, Queens, NY 11101
Serves: Queensbridge North, Queensbridge South, and Ravenswood Houses
Telephone: 718.571.9664

Staten Island

Equus Workforce Solutions–1 Edgewater Street, Suite 305A, Staten Island, NY 10305
Serves: South Beach, Todt Hill, Mariner’s Harbor, Stapleton, West Brighton I, Richmond Terrace, and Berry Houses
Telephone: 718.285.8394

AMERICA WORKS

Headquarters: 228 East 45th Street, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10017
Telephone: 212.599.5627
www.americaworks.com

A for-profit organization providing companies with candidates for entry-level positions. Specializes in helping people who receive public assistance obtain employment through free job training, work readiness, skills building, job placement, and other support. Offers veterans services.

BROOKLYN WORKFORCE INNOVATIONS (BWI)

621 Degraw Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217
Telephone: 718.237.2017
<https://bwiny.org>

Helps New Yorkers establish careers in sectors that offer good wages and opportunities for advancement. Offers several

sector-based training programs and one general job-readiness certification program, including Customized Training (administrative jobs in affordable housing and more), Brooklyn Networks (voice and data telecommunications cable installation), Brooklyn Woods (skilled woodworking and green cabinetmaking), the “Made in NY” PA and Post Production Training Programs (TV and film production), Red Hook on the Road (commercial driving), KindWork (customer service in tech), and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Training Academy (NYCHA residents only). Also offers financial coaching, legal assistance, and a wide range of referrals for various needs. Contact for orientation dates and qualification details.

CAMBA—WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

2244 Church Avenue, 4th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11226
Telephone: 718.282.0108 (Workforce Development)
Telephone: 718.226.0436 (Small Business Services)

Offers a range of services to connect people to full time work including assistance with job readiness and digital fluency training, resume prep, job matching, a customer service and critical thinking program, Security Guard, and OSHA and HVAC&R trainings tailored to help overcome obstacles to employment and provide industry recognized credentials. Call for information on eligibility. Also provides small business development services including one-on-one consultations, and entrepreneurial assistance including business plan, finance, branding and mobile/social media marketing workshops, technology training, and loans.

See the full listing for CAMBA on [page 117](#).

CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL—WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Offers training programs for construction pre-apprenticeship, hospitality careers, and customer service jobs to low-income New Yorkers. Matches clients with an employment specialist who

assists with personalized assessments, resume review, interview skills, application screenings, job referrals, and post-hire support.

See the full listing for Chinese-American Planning Council on [page 259](#).

DRESS FOR SUCCESS WORLDWIDE—NEW YORK PROGRAM

32 East 31st Street, New York, NY 10016

www.dressforsuccessnyc.org

Provides professional attire and workforce development services for women. Services include resume building, mock interviewing, job searching, skills assessments, speed networking, elevator pitch design, and more. To receive services, potential clients must complete a client self-referral form and schedule an appointment.

EPRA—JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES

261 West 35th Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 212.947.1471

www.eprany.org

A vocational rehabilitation program for individuals ages 18 and over in recovery from substance use disorder. Provides vocational training and career counseling. Services include job placement, readiness training and evaluation, and assessment of work experience. Provides follow-up to help clients deal with workplace issues. Must be unemployed, have stable housing, and be in treatment or recovery.

GOODWILL NYNJ—WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

25 Elm Place, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 718.728.5400

<https://goodwillnynj.org/job-seekers-and-employers>

Provides training and job placement. GoodTemps is a contractual temporary staffing service, specializing in short- and long-term employment and temp-to-hire opportunities for a diverse population, including people with disabilities and those with barriers to employment.

THE HOPE PROGRAM

www.thehopeprogram.org

1360 Garrison Avenue, Bronx, NY 10474

Telephone: 646.400.5292

1 Smith Street, 4th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 347.797.1878

Provides job training, placement, advancement, and lifelong career support for people ages 18 and over. Programs include HOPEworks (focused on essential skills including math and digital literacy), NYC CoolRoofs, Green and Clean HVAC Program, Sustainable South Bronx (construction), and Intervine (green infrastructure projects). Support services include food and clothing, housing resources, financial resources, digital literacy, mental health resources, and more. Students must attend an information session before being invited into the intensive training program and be legally authorized to work in the US. Visit the website for more information on in-person and virtual information sessions, including registration.

HOT BREAD KITCHEN

c/o Chelsea Market, 75 9th Avenue, Suite 0610, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.540.9070

<https://hotbreadkitchen.org>

A nonprofit providing free culinary workforce training, small business incubation, and an ecosystem of support for women, immigrants, and people of color pursuing economic opportunities in the food industry. The workforce programs are designed to

equip individuals with essential technical and professional culinary skills and place graduates in high-quality jobs in the food industry. Members participating in the Signature Culinary Training, Front of House, and First Course NYC Apprenticeship receive a stipend and daily MetroCard while in training. Also offers food entrepreneurship programs to start or scale a business. Visit the website for more information.

NONTRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN (NEW)

243 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.627.6252

www.new-nyc.org

An employment and training program for women and nonbinary individuals interested in building and construction trades, public utilities, transportation, green jobs, and building maintenance and operations industries. Support services include transportation, tool kits, work attire, food assistance, initial union dues, housing referrals, assistance finding childcare, and supportive counseling. Must have a high school diploma or HSE, be eligible to work in the US, and be age 18 or over. Contact for information session details and registration.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW (OBT)



<https://obtjobs.org>

Employment training centers for adults and youth providing basic education, HSE preparation, job training, job placement, and follow-up services. Programs include HSE Program, Cloud Support Engineering, Digital Marketing, Medical Administrative Program, Careers in Restoration, Adult Employment Services, Computer Literacy Classes, ESOL Classes, and Adult GED Preparation classes. Visit the website for information about classes, eligibility, and registration.

Bushwick Office

25 Thornton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206

Telephone: 718.387.1600

Sunset Park Office

882 3rd Avenue, Suite 10-10 NE, Unit 18, Brooklyn, NY 11232

Telephone: 718.369.0303

Innovation Lab

87 35th Street, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11232

Telephone: 718.801.8970

Jamaica Office

168-25 Jamaica Avenue, Suite 202, Jamaica, NY 11432

Telephone: 718.526.2984

STREETWISE PARTNERS

222 Broadway, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 646.704.0039

www.streetwisepartners.org

Connects underemployed/unemployed New Yorkers with mentors who are achieving success in professional fields. Helps job seekers develop office and computer skills, be prepared for interviews, learn how to network, and more. Must commit to 13 consecutive weekly sessions and have a high school diploma or equivalency. Call or visit the website for further eligibility requirements.

STRIVE INTERNATIONAL

205 East 122nd Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 212.360.1100

<https://strive.org>

A 10–12 week work-readiness and job-placement program offering job training and support for people ages 18 and over. The Strive Career Path provides a job readiness workshop, followed by hard skills training in two career pathways: construction and maintenance or health and office operations. Participants can earn industry-recognized certifications and are offered internship oppor-

tunities with employer partners. Must have a high school diploma or HSE; some programs require a GED. Provides lifetime services and support to graduates of the program. Visit the website to register for an information session.

WORKERS DEFENSE LEAGUE (WDL)

PO Box 618, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159

Telephone: 212.627.1931

www.workersdefenseleague.org

A nonprofit workers' rights organization that specializes in helping people who have been denied unemployment insurance. Also conducts trainings for unions and other organizations about unemployment insurance rules and the hearing process.

Online Resources

UNTAPPED SOLUTIONS

<https://untappedsolutions.io>

A professional-based social network geared towards reentry for formerly incarcerated people. People can create a profile to connect with reentry organizations, employers, and their peers.

LEGAL ACTION CENTER—NATIONAL HIRE NETWORK

www.lac.org/major-project/national-hire-network

Provides publications for information on rap sheets, one's rights when applying for jobs, and a list of helpful agencies by state.

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS—THE OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK

www.bls.gov/ooh

An online resource for career information with descriptions for specific occupations including what workers do on the job, working conditions, the training and education needed, expected earnings, and expected job prospects.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

<https://dol.ny.gov>

Search for job openings in private companies as well as publicly funded organizations. People can also search by job code and military occupational code. Information is provided on apprenticeship training and much more.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR—CAREERZONE

<https://careerzone.labor.ny.gov>

Provides job descriptions with the skills and education needed, typical wages, job outlook, and occupation assessment. Click on Guest Tools to find help in writing resumes and cover letters, a guide to employment opportunities, and job resources on the internet.

THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

<https://cityjobs.nyc.gov>

Provides information about working for the City of New York. Find schedules for civil-service exams for professional, clerical, skilled-trade, health, transportation, and public safety positions.

CAREER DISCOVERY NYC

<https://careerdiscovery.cityofnewyork.us>

A career search and skills training tool. Provides information about specific careers and the skills needed to get a job in those occupations.

IDEALIST

www.idealists.org

Search for job listings and volunteer opportunities in the nonprofit sector by location.

INDEED

www.indeed.com

Collects job postings from dozens of other job-search websites and puts them all in one spot for searching. It can also be used to post one's resume.

LINKEDIN

www.linkedin.com

A networking site where users can post a professional resume and connect with colleagues, coworkers, friends, and business contacts. Without an account, one can browse job postings and read workplace articles from industry leaders.

Starting Your Own Business

EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT—DIVISION OF MINORITY AND WOMEN'S BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Telephone: 646.846.7364

<https://esd.ny.gov/doing-business-ny/mwbe>

Provides information and resources to support minority- and women-owned businesses in the NYC procurement process.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION (DCWP)

42 Broadway, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/dca/index.page

Licenses more than 70 different categories of businesses including home-improvement contractors, dry cleaners and laundries, tow-truck operators, employment agencies, and electronics stores. Provides free financial counseling through their Financial Empowerment Center. Visit the website for information on licenses and permits, filing a complaint, ordering a publication, booking a Financial Empowerment Center appointment, and more.

NYC SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/sbs/index.page

Offers a range of services to help one start, operate, and expand a business in NYC. Provides support and help with developing a business plan, accessing business courses, finding financing, hiring workers, training employees, navigating government regulations, accessing government incentive programs, and obtaining minority- and women-owned business enterprise certification for free. Visit

the website for more information, helpful guides and checklists, and locations.

BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTER NETWORK (BOC)

85 South Oxford Street, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Telephone: 718.624.9115

<https://bocnet.org>

Provides business development resources to underserved entrepreneurs who are trying to start or expand their small business. Offers comprehensive small business counseling and services ranging from business plan development to licensing and permit information. Call or visit the website for a list of Entrepreneurship Assistance Centers.

SCORE NEW YORK CITY

26 Federal Plaza, Room 3100, New York, NY 10278

Telephone: 212.264.4507

www.score.org/newyorkcity

Provides free business counseling and advice to all types of businesses in all stages of development, from idea to start-up to success, from a national network of retired and working volunteers. Offers low-cost online workshops. Also offers a veterans entrepreneurship program. Visit the website to search for a counselor or to request a free mentoring appointment.

START SMALL THINK BIG

www.startsmallthinkbig.org

Provides free legal, financial, and marketing services for entrepreneurs and small business owners in NYC. Also offers classes and workshops on a range of business-related topics. Programs and services are all remote. Email hello@startsmallthinkbig.org or visit

the website for information about becoming a client and to apply for services.

Workers' Rights & Wage Theft

Workers are protected by federal and state labor laws, regardless of immigration status.

The term wage theft refers to the act of employers stealing earned wages from their employees. Wage theft can include, but is not limited to:

- Failure to pay minimum wage, overtime
- Stealing tips
- Misclassification of employees as independent contractors
- Payroll fraud
- Failure to provide required meals and rest breaks

Depending on your industry or job classification, what is considered wage theft can vary.

Documented has created a resource for people who think their wages have been stolen, including how to report potential wage theft, available online at <https://documentedny.com/2024/04/24/wage-theft-what-to-know-if-you-think-your-wages-are-stolen>.

Additional information on rights for formerly incarcerated people is available in the *Avoiding Discrimination in Your Job Search* section starting on [page 397](#).

US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR—MIGRANT WORKER RIGHTS

www.dol.gov/general/migrantworker

Visit the website for information on rights and resources including information on recruitment, wages and hours, workplace safety and health, organizing rights, discrimination and harassment, retaliation, trafficking, support for home countries, filing a claim, and more.

US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR—WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION

Helpline: 866.487.9243

www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/workers

Responsible for enforcing federal labor laws. Provides information on the right to fair pay, the right to take unpaid leave, young workers' rights and child labor laws, farm workers' rights, H-2B workers' rights, and restaurant workers' rights. The website has a resource library including information on misclassification of employees as independent contractors and frequently asked questions. Call or visit the website for more information, including how to file a complaint.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR—DIVISION OF LABOR STANDARDS

Telephone: 888.469.7365

<https://dol.ny.gov/labor-standards>

Protects all workers, including those that are undocumented or paid off the books, and ensures employers are following State Labor Laws including minimum wage, hours of work, employment of minors, payment of wages, farm labor, nursing mothers in the workplace, and more. Call or visit the website for more information, including on how to submit a labor standards complaint.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION (DCWP)—WORKERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

Telephone: 311

www.nyc.gov/site/dca/workers/workersrights/know-your-worker-rights.page

People who work in NYC have rights regardless of immigration status. Visit the website for an overview of important information about people's rights at work. Topics include paid safe and sick leave, temporary schedule changes, fast food worker rights, retail

and utility safety worker rights, food delivery worker rights, free-lance worker rights, computer benefits, and grocery worker rights. Information on rights at work enforced by other entities include minimum wage and hourly rights, prevailing wage, paid family sick leave, Family and Medical Leave Act, workers compensation and disability benefits, no forced labor, discrimination-free workplace, right to organize, unemployment benefits, health insurance, and correct worker classification.

Information for job applicant rights include pay transparency, salary history ban, rights when using an employment agency, and automated employment decision tools.

Note: “employee” and “independent contractor” are different worker classifications. The webpage indicates when a right at work applies to an independent contractor.

Workers can report business violations of workplace laws to DCWP using online services, by email, or by mail. DCWP will treat all information received as confidential and will not disclose it without your permission or unless required by law. For more information, including complaint forms, visit www.nyc.gov/site/dca/workers/workersrights/file-workplace-complaint.page.

Preparing for the Job Search

What You Can Do Before Leaving Prison

Take advantage of programs in your facility

Programs and services at your facility may help you prepare for release. You can ask your facility to invite people from community agencies or companies that do a large amount of hiring. You can start reaching out to organizations that provide help to people preparing for release.

If you plan to live in New York City after your release, you may want a copy of this book for yourself. You can receive a free copy of *Connections* by writing to **Jail & Prison Services, The New York Public Library, 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011**.

If you are not returning to New York City, please see reentry guidebooks for other parts of New York State starting on [page 20](#) and Reentry Task Forces by county starting on [page 21](#).

Gather the documents you will need

To apply for jobs, and to be eligible for most private or government programs, you will need certain types of documentation. You can save time if you begin the process to get documentation while you are still incarcerated. For most jobs, you will need a Social Security card (sometimes a number alone is not sufficient) and proof of identification (birth certificate, driver's license, or nondriver photo ID). Each agency or employer has its own requirements for documentation.

Some documents cannot be obtained while in prison. In some cases, a family member or friend on the outside can help. Ask your contact in the community to visit <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/category/?id=311-15> for information on how to obtain important documents including birth certificates, naturalization cards, driver's licenses, and nondriver IDs.

The following may also be useful to have when you are released:

- Prison discharge papers (given to you upon release)
- Military discharge papers (DD214), more information found on [page 271](#)

- Permanent Resident Card (Green Card, for non-US citizens), more information found on [page 256](#)
- Proof of education (college transcripts or HSE certificate), more information found on [page 47](#)
- Working papers (required for people under 18 years of age), more information found on [page 343](#)
- Certificate of Relief from Disabilities or Certificate of Good Conduct (apply after release)

You can request a copy of your rap sheet to review and make sure there are no errors. See [page 394](#) for more information.

Personal and professional references may be required to apply for jobs, to get back into school, and to receive certificates that can help restore your rights. Letters from people who will speak positively on your behalf about your skills, abilities, work history, and motivation can make a difference when applying for jobs. People you can ask include a former supervisor, a teacher, a mentor, or a religious or spiritual advisor. Usually, family and friends do not serve as references. Start a file or folder for these letters and keep them together so you have them all in one place when you need them.

What You Can Do Upon Release



Restore your rights

Depending on the conviction, you may have lost your right to engage in certain types of employment or apply for certain types of licenses. In some cases, you may be disqualified for certain civil service positions that are classified as public office, such as firefighters. Visit the **National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction** at <https://niccc.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org> to search for restrictions on professional licenses. **John Jay College Institute for Justice and Opportunity** has published a guide explaining the process for obtaining licenses in 25 high demand occupations and professions called *Getting to Work With a Criminal Record: New York State License Guide*, available at <https://justiceandopportunity.org/resources>.

To restore your rights, you need:

- a **Certificate of Relief from Disabilities**, for those who have been convicted of any number of misdemeanors and no more than one felony; two or more felony convictions in the same court on the same day are counted as one felony for determining your eligibility
- a **Certificate of Good Conduct**, for those who have been convicted of more than one felony

Information about certificates

Certificates are an assumption of rehabilitation and evidence that employers and licensing agencies must consider when licensing or hiring. Certificate of Relief from Disabilities is a confusing name. Having a felony conviction and having a disability are in no way the same thing. Your parole officer may simply refer to this certificate as a Certificate of Relief.

What certificates can do

Certificates have the power to remove any legal bar imposed on you as a result of having been convicted of the crime(s) specified on the certificate. If you have a certificate, not only do you become eligible to apply for positions you might otherwise be barred from, but the certificate informs the employer that the state or a court assumes you are rehabilitated and that the employer should take this into consideration. A certificate is not a pardon, and an employer is still allowed to conduct a background check after offering you a job.

To learn about defending yourself against job discrimination, see [page 397](#).

Applying for a certificate

To get a **Certificate of Relief From Disabilities** you must apply to DOCCS if:

- You were sentenced to a New York State DOCCS correctional facility, or
- You were convicted in a federal court or a court in another state and you are now a resident of New York State.

If you were convicted in a NY court, but you did not serve time in a New York State DOCCS correctional facility, you must apply to the court that sentenced you.

After release, there is no waiting period to apply for this certificate.

To apply for a **Certificate of Good Conduct**, which is granted to persons who have multiple felony convictions, you may have to wait three to five years after completing your most recent sentence, depending on the severity of your most serious conviction. For example, you may have two felonies, a class-E felony from 1997 and a class-B felony from 2007, and you were discharged from parole in 2019. Since your most serious crime was a B felony, you would have to wait five years from the completion of your most recent sentence (2019). Therefore, you would be eligible to apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct in 2024.

To request an application form for a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities if you have served time in a DOCCS facility, or were convicted out of state or in federal court, or to request an application for a Certificate of Good Conduct, write to:

NYS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION (DOCCS)

Attn: Certificate Review Unit

Harriman State Campus—Building 4

1220 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12226

Application forms are also available on the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision website at <https://doccs.ny.gov/certificate-relief-good-conduct-restoration-rights> or by calling **518.485.8953**.

What to expect

Once you submit the completed application, DOCCS will assign a field Parole Officer for an investigation. This does not mean that you are being placed on parole. The Officer will review:

- Employment history and how you have supported yourself
- Proof that you have paid income taxes for the last two years
- Proof that you have paid any fines or restitution set by the courts

After DOCCS has received all necessary documents and records from you, the field Parole Officer assigned to you will contact you to arrange an interview at your home/residence to answer any

remaining questions and confirm your current circumstances and living situation.

Even though you are not required to include evidence of rehabilitation in your application packet, it may be helpful to do so. These can include:

- A written personal statement about the positive changes you have made since your conviction
- Copies of certificates from programs you've attended such as job training
- Letters of support from employers, counselors, supervisors, teachers, and others
- Copies of school transcripts

The Legal Action Center's guide, *How to Gather Evidence of Rehabilitation* provides more examples and can be found under the issue area "Fair Hiring and Employment" from their resources webpage at www.lac.org/resources.

For more information, contact your parole/probation officer, or the **Legal Action Center, 225 Varick Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10014**, telephone: **212.243.1313**. You can also visit www.reentry.net/ny and click on Criminal Records for applications and other information. Certificates generally take one year to be processed. **Community Service Society's Next Door Project** also provides assistance to people applying for certificates, visit their website at www.cssny.org/programs/entry/the-next-door-project or call **212.614.5441** for more information.

Certificates typically take about one year to be processed.

Your rap sheet (Record of Arrest and Prosecution)

Often, arrests that should be sealed (arrests not leading to convictions, youthful offender adjudications, or convictions for noncriminal offenses) remain open or unsealed on your record and available for potential employers to see.

A study, published in 2013 by the Legal Action Center, found at least 30% of arrest and prosecution records contained at least one error, and some contained as many as 10 or more.

Employers who can legally fingerprint you and get a copy of your

rap sheet from New York State include: civil service employers, banks and financial institutions, bonding agencies, hospitals, museums, childcare agencies, home care agencies, mental health facilities, school bus driving companies, security-guard companies, and law enforcement agencies (who are entitled to see sealed information as well). It is to your advantage to clean up your record, and to have corrected or sealed whatever errors or unnecessary information may appear on it.

If you are currently serving a sentence in a New York State prison or in a county or city jail, you can receive a copy of your rap sheet free of charge. You must include your name, any aliases, your date of birth, your DIN, and your projected release date. The Division of Criminal Justice Services will not send you your rap sheet if you will be incarcerated for less than 45 days. Send your request to:

NYS CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES, LEGAL SERVICES OFFICE

Record Review Unit

Alfred E. Smith Building

80 South Swan Street, Albany, NY 12210

Telephone: 518.457.9847

www.criminaljustice.ny.gov

The **Legal Action Center, Community Service Society**, or the Public Defender's Office in your borough can also assist you in obtaining your rap sheet.

To obtain a federal rap sheet, known as an Identity History Summary, you must fill out an application with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) found at <https://forms.fbi.gov/identity-history-summary-checks-review> and send: (1) the completed application; (2) a full set of fingerprints on a standard fingerprint form FD-1164 with your name, date of birth, and signature on the fingerprint card; and (3) a money order or certified check for \$18 made payable to the Treasury of the United States to: **FBI CJIS Division—Summary Request, 1000 Custer Hollow Road, Clarksburg, WV 26306.**

A complete list of instructions can be found at www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks.

Many employers are not authorized to get a copy of your rap sheet

directly from the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). Prospective employers may conduct a background check using a consumer-reporting agency. Federal and New York State fair credit reporting laws require that an employer get your permission before conducting a background check. You should get a copy of your consumer credit report for yourself as you prepare to look for a job. These reports are often incomplete or inaccurate and you may need to spend some time correcting the information. You can obtain one free credit report per year by calling **877.322.8228** to request an application or visit www.annualcreditreport.com for more information. You will need your Social Security number when filling out the application for the free credit report.

An employer or individual may also get a copy of your conviction history from the Office of Court Administration (OCA). This is the agency that keeps all court information on file. An OCA background check costs \$95. Visit www.nycourts.gov/apps/chrs for more information.

For veterans, upgrading or correcting an other-than-honorable military discharge should also be considered. Contact the Veterans Affairs New York Regional Office at **800.827.1000** to request an application or visit www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions for more information.

Remember that all of these procedures (obtaining and cleaning up errors on your rap sheet, sealing arrests not leading to convictions, etc.) will take time and cost money. Start the process now, and make sure that prospective employers do not see any unnecessary information or errors when obtaining access to your record.

Sealing conviction records with Criminal Procedure Law § 160.59

Eligible individuals may request to have their records sealed if they have not been convicted of another crime for a period of 10 years from the day they were sentenced or released from jail/prison (whichever is later). People are eligible if they have only two (2) convictions on their record or, in some cases, if more than two convictions are related to the same one or two incidents. All misdemeanor convictions, other than those requiring registration as a sex offender, are eligible, and some felonies are eligible to be

sealed. A person can seal, at most, one (1) felony. Sex offenses, violent felonies, and serious felonies are not eligible for sealing.

Members of the public (including employers and housing agencies) will not be able to see a conviction that is sealed. All arms of law enforcement, including police, district attorney, the courts, and corrections will be able to see the sealed conviction/prosecution. In addition, the Financial Frauds and Consumer Protection Unit of the State Department of Financial Services, the Office of Professional Medical Conduct of the State Department of Health, the Child Protective Services Units of any local departments of social services, US Citizenship and Immigration Services, and any agency that issues firearm licenses or gun permits will have access to sealed convictions. Under the New York State Human Rights Law (NY Executive Law § 296.16), employers are not permitted to ask about or act in response to a conviction that has been sealed, except if a person is applying to be a police or peace officer.

To apply to have your eligible conviction(s) sealed visit the New York State Courts website at www.nycourts.gov/FORMS/cpl_160.59_sealing_application/index.shtml to obtain a copy of the required forms, which include the “Notice of Motion and Affidavit in Support of Sealing Pursuant to CPL §160.59” form, and instructions. The instructions also contain a list of crimes that are not eligible for sealing. Read and follow the instructions provided to file a motion for sealing with the court.

Community Service Society’s Next Door Project also provides assistance to people with sealing eligible cases, visit their website at www.cssny.org/programs/entry/the-next-door-project or call **212.614.5441** for more information.

Addressing Discrimination in the Job Search

Know your rights as a formerly incarcerated person

Under New York State law, **Article 23A**, it is illegal for an employer to deny someone a job based on a conviction, unless the employer can demonstrate it is job-related. The law says that in deciding

whether or not a conviction is job-related, the employer must consider a number of factors, including evidence of rehabilitation (a Certificate of Good Conduct, for example). With sufficient evidence of rehabilitation, the burden of proof is on the employer to demonstrate that hiring you would be a risk to people or property, and that your conviction is directly related to the job for which you are applying.

A law called the **Fair Chance Act** says most New York City employers cannot ask about your conviction history until after offering you a job.

What does New York City's Fair Chance Act do?

- Bans job ads that say things like “no felonies” or “must pass background check”
- Bans any questions about conviction history on job applications
- Bans any questions about conviction history during job interviews
- An employer can run a background check only after a conditional job offer is made

It is important to remember that a person cannot be discriminated against because of arrests, either. “Have you ever been arrested?” is an illegal question, both on a job application and during an interview. Your prior arrests can not be used against you even after a job offer is made, regardless of the reason for the arrest.

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If you are denied a job because of your conviction history, the employer must explain why in writing. The employer must also connect your conviction to job duties and show that it creates an unreasonable risk. For example, a person convicted of embezzlement at a financial institution, once released, would have difficulty getting a job handling money at a bank. The employer must hold the job offer open for three days to allow you time to discuss the issue or any wrong information.

There are laws that require background checks and prevent people with certain serious convictions from working in some jobs with children, older people, or in law enforcement, among other positions. The Fair Chance Act does not affect these limitations or change the background check requirements. These employers are

allowed to tell applicants that the jobs are subject to a background check and that they may deny employment to workers with conviction histories that may pose a risk.

In addition to all employment in New York City, applicants for positions with New York State agencies will not be required to discuss or disclose information about prior convictions until and unless the agency has interviewed the candidate and has made a conditional job offer.

If an employer did not follow the rules described here, call **311** and ask for the **Commission on Human Rights**. You can leave an anonymous tip or file a complaint about what happened to you. If the employer is found to have broken the law, you could recover lost wages or other damages, and the employer may have to pay a fine.

You can also contact the **Legal Action Center** for help if you experience discrimination by calling **212.243.1313**. They can advise you on your rights and give help with how to proceed. Important information relating to employment discrimination can be found on their website at www.lac.org or you can write to them at **225 Varick Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10014** to request information by mail.

Community Service Society's Next Door Project also provides rights information and assistance if you experience employment discrimination by private employers or government agencies that issue licenses. Visit their website at www.cssny.org/programs/entry/the-next-door-project or call **212.614.5441** for more information.

It is important to note that the Fair Chance Act is in effect in the five boroughs of New York City. If you are looking for work outside of New York City, you may still be asked about your conviction history on a job application or during an interview. In those cases, it is important to present your history in an accurate and positive light.

You can learn more about addressing your conviction in the *Resume* section on [page 406](#) and in the *Interview* section on [page 433](#).

Addressing alcohol or substance use disorder in your past

It is illegal for an employer to ask you whether or not you have a history of alcohol or substance use disorder. An employer can only ask if you are currently using illegal drugs. It is illegal for an employer to discriminate against you as someone who is recovering from alcohol or substance use disorder. If you have been refused employment and believe it was due to a history of alcohol or substance use disorder, or due to participation in a treatment program, contact the **New York State Division of Human Rights** at **888.392.3644** or the **Legal Action Center** at **212.243.1313**.

Federal confidentiality laws prohibit most treatment programs from revealing information about your treatment without your consent. However, an employer can learn of past or current substance use by conducting a background check or due to a medical exam required as part of the hiring process for some jobs.

NYC Human Rights Law

Employers cannot discriminate against job applicants and employees based on their age, race, color, religion/creed, national origin, gender, gender identity and gender expression, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, marital or partnership status, immigration or citizenship status, natural hair or hairstyles, actual or perceived height or weight, arrest or conviction record, credit history, salary history, sexual and reproductive health decisions, caregiver status, status as a current or former military service member, unemployment status, or status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, or stalking.

More information on the NYC Human Rights Law can be found on [page 233](#).

In New York City, it is illegal for interviewers to ask about your past compensation amounts (salary or hourly wage). As of November 2022, most employers in New York City are required by law to include a good faith salary range for every job, promotion, and transfer opportunity advertised. For more information visit www.nyc.gov/site/cchr/media/pay-transparency.page.

As of September 2023, New York State businesses with four or more employees are required to list compensation ranges for designated job opportunities, promotions, and transfers. These ranges

consist of the minimum and maximum annual salary or hourly compensation believed to be accurate at the time of posting. Employers must also clearly state if a position is commission-based, and prohibits employers from retaliating against employees who discuss their compensation with coworkers. For more information visit <https://dol.ny.gov/pay-transparency>.

Demonstrating rehabilitative change

The law in New York City that prohibits questions about conviction records means that it is your decision to discuss your past in an interview. But, if you are offered a job, a background check may reveal your history. Be prepared for questions on whether your conviction relates to the job position. Certificates can act as an official line of support and a clean rap sheet will benefit you as well. Make sure to maintain supportive and accurate paperwork. In addition, practice answering questions that may be asked in order to feel confident discussing the ways you have changed.

Be ready to explain how you've managed the circumstances that led to your time in prison. For example, "Obstacles that were affecting me five years ago led to bad decision-making. Since then, I have learned to understand the underlying causes of my circumstances and choices. After release, my family and friends, as well as my educational experience, helped me develop perspective. I am positive that my past will not interfere with my work or my ability to make good decisions."

When choosing references for your resume and job application, select individuals who can testify to your present-day character and speak about your specific skills. Make sure to keep reference letters and contacts updated. Keep a file of these letters that speak of the meaningful ways you have changed and reflect your current set of skills.

What to Do While Unemployed

Assess your resources and plan realistically

It is important to plan a long-term strategy during your job search. Some questions to ask yourself: Can my family help support me while I seek work? Am I eligible for unemployment insurance,

food stamps, or other types of government assistance? If I have savings, how long will they last?

Looking for work is never easy. The more time you can spend on looking for a job, the better your chances of finding one. Having people you can share your experiences with can be very important in job searching. Make yourself accountable. If you have family or friends supporting you in your job search, talk to them about how the day went and what your plan will be for upcoming days.

Volunteer work

Volunteer work has many advantages. While volunteering you gain experience and make contacts that can later help you find a job. Any experience you gain should be included on your resume or job application and contacts can serve as references when applying to jobs. Volunteering shows you are a motivated individual, interested in expanding your skill set.

Assessing Your Skills

While preparing for the job search it is important to assess your interests and skills. Some people know exactly what kind of work they want to look for, while others may be less certain.

Working with a job counselor or career coach can help make you aware of what you have to offer. It can also help to establish some realistic short- and long-term goals. A job counselor will interview you in order to assess your abilities and your preference toward a particular field of work.

To begin by assessing your own skills, there are books and online tools that can help, such as the CareerOneStop online assessment at www.careeronestop.org/Toolkit/Skills/skills-matcher.aspx. You can reach out to the job information center at your public library and ask for other materials and resources.

On the following pages is a Personal Skills Worksheet that you can use to begin a self-assessment. The worksheet can also be helpful in creating the content of your resume.

Personal Skills Worksheet

Skills

Identify your skills from the list below. There is space for you to add skills that you have that are not on the list. Those are the things that make you unique.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Able to get along with others | <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Able to make decisions | <input type="checkbox"/> Good communicator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Able to meet deadlines | <input type="checkbox"/> Neat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Able to work under pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> Organized |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive attitude |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Careful | <input type="checkbox"/> Punctual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committed | <input type="checkbox"/> Quick learner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent | <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to follow directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative | <input type="checkbox"/> Willing to use initiative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable | <input type="checkbox"/> Works quickly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Detail oriented | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Exercise: Choose three skills from above that you feel are your strongest and give an example of how you show this skill. Here is an example: "I am dependable. I was never late for a shift and always prepared to start the day when I arrived. I stay organized in order to meet deadlines."

1. "I am _____. I have shown this quality by:

2. "I am_____. I have shown this quality by:

3. "I am_____. I have shown this quality by:

Identifying Job-Content Skills

Check the skills that you have now that are specific to a particular job.

Administrative Skills

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can delegate work to others. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have the ability to resolve complaints. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can develop a budget. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know how to evaluate priorities and make decisions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can design programs for employee training. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can develop innovative, time-saving work procedures. |

Business Skills

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I communicate well by email, phone, and on video conference. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know how to use computer programs such as MS Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, Excel, and Google Workspace. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can enter information into various data entry platforms. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can make financial reports. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can answer questions from customers/clients clearly. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can sell goods and/or services. |

Technical Skills

I can assemble, repair, or troubleshoot engines and other machinery.

I can understand and use blueprints.

I can assess, repair, or upgrade computers and phones.

I can construct, maintain, or restore buildings.

I can repair automobiles.

I can make or repair furniture.

Skills in Human Services

I can diffuse difficult situations between people.

I enjoy teaching people a new skill.

I am caring, sensitive, and people-oriented.

I enjoy working with all kinds of people.

I can help people solve problems.

I can speak and present confidently in front of large groups.

Language Skills (Spanish, American Sign Language, Creole, etc.):

Licenses/Certificates I Hold (driver's license, OSHA, MS Office, etc.):

Writing a Resume

What is a resume?

A resume is a document that lists your work experience, education, and skills. It summarizes relevant facts to show a prospective employer that you can do the job you are applying for. Your resume should highlight valuable and relevant skills, in a clear and readable way.

Why is a resume important?

- Most employers require that you have a resume when applying for a job.
- A well-written resume can help you get an interview.
- After the interview, it serves as a reminder for the employer of who you are and what you discussed.
- Creating or updating a resume helps to organize your work experience and skills, even if you do not need it for every job you apply to.

What goes in a resume?

- Your name, phone number, and email address
- A professional summary/occupational goal
- A list of key skills relevant to the job you are applying to
- Work and volunteer experience, and educational history

Not everything must appear on your resume every time, and the order can change depending on the type of resume you need and the job you are applying to.

Tailoring your resume

You should tailor your resume to show how your work experience specifically meets the needs of the job you're applying for. It is a good idea to make two or more resumes to focus on different aspects of your experience. If you've had many different jobs in your work history, you may wish to emphasize some in applying for one job and others in applying for another.

Ways that you can tailor your resume include:

- Write an opening statement that directly links your experience and education to the requirements of the job
- List the most relevant skills for the job first

- Include any certificates you have obtained that are needed for the job

It is important to include relevant keywords and phrases throughout your resume, specifically words and phrases that are used in the job advertisement and description. This is because larger employers use digital application tracking systems (ATSs) to search and filter high volumes of resumes before they are seen by a person, and resumes that do not include the right keywords may not be seen.

Using action verbs

Compare the following two examples and the impression they might make upon the employer. Action verbs are underlined.

- (a) 2020–2023 Smith & Sons, Bronx, NY
HVAC Technician
- Heating, ventilation, and cooling
 - Inspections and repairs
- (b) 2020–2023 Smith & Sons, Bronx, NY
HVAC Technician
- Installed, maintained, and repaired heating, ventilation, and cooling units.
 - Maintained good working order of units to ensure compliance with state regulations.
 - Conducted complete equipment inspections of 100 sites.
 - Trained and supervised two apprentices.
 - Performed preventative maintenance so that machines were in working order.

Some action verbs to help with your resume:

achieved, adapted, addressed, administered, arranged, assessed, assisted, authorized, collaborated, conducted, demonstrated, designed, developed, devised, directed, edited, enforced, evaluated, facilitated, fostered, generated, handled, hired, implemented, improved, initiated, launched, maintained, managed, marketed, mastered, motivated, operated, organized, oversaw, performed, planned, programmed, provided, publicized, recommended, reorganized, repaired, represented, researched, scheduled, screened, streamlined, supervised, trained, updated

Be sure to include all of the skills you have that are relevant to the job you're applying to, not just the ones that you've gained through formal work experience. Many of us have useful skills that we may not think of when applying for a job. If you can speak a second language, include it on your resume. If you have excellent computer skills, say so. Have you ever operated any special types of vehicles—forklifts or trailer trucks? Or trained and supervised people at the facility's library or transitional services center? Have you ever exhibited leadership skills such as working with young people in a youth program or coaching a team? Don't neglect to list such things. Employers are interested in your ability to get along with others on the job as much as they are in formal training. Show them in as many ways as possible that you possess the attributes they are looking for.

Types of resumes

Although there is no single format for a resume, generally they fall into one of two categories: the Chronological Resume, and the Skills Resume (also called a Functional Resume). Choose the type of resume best suited to your individual experience.

The chronological resume lists the jobs you've had and the schools you've attended, beginning with the most recent and going back in time. It is best suited for those people who have a relatively unbroken work record and can offer good explanations for time gaps in their work record (time spent in school or service in the military, for example).

The skills resume highlights your particular skills and abilities and puts less emphasis on the record of your work and education history. It is best suited for those who have changed jobs frequently, have not worked for long periods of time, and/or acquired skills while incarcerated or in non-job-related pursuits.

How to account for time incarcerated

Employers do not like to see time gaps on resumes. They may assume that a person with a strong record of employment or schooling is a dependable person, and thus less of a risk to hire. However, there are creative and professional ways to account for time gaps.

When creating your resume, explain how you spent your time in

prison to your best advantage. If you finished your high school diploma program or received tutoring or took a correspondence course, say so under “Educational Background.” If you were trained in asbestos removal, list this under “Skills” or “Work Experience.” List porter work done in prison, maintenance or landscaping, and work in a prison office, library, or transitional services center.

Help writing a resume

It is a good idea to get some expert help in writing a resume. For example, reach out to your public library’s job information center, where you will find resources on how to write a resume, along with sample resumes. Specially trained staff will be able to look over what you have written and help you strengthen any parts of your resume that need improvement.

A resume must always look neat, and be typed and saved as a digital file. A digital copy of your resume is essential so that you may edit it to fit each job to which you apply. Public libraries have computers with printers for you to use. When creating your resume, you can save a copy of it on a flash drive, on web-based cloud storage (such as Google Drive), or email it to yourself and save it in your email inbox to access when needed.

If you need assistance with creating a digital copy of your resume, please see the *Computer Literacy* section of this book on [page 54](#).

Sample Resumes

On the following pages are three sample resumes with notes explaining how formerly incarcerated people can present their time in prison.

Sample Resume I: Chronological Resume

DAVID COOPER

212.555.1312 | dcooper@gmail.com

OCCUPATIONAL GOAL: Automotive Technician

EDUCATION

1 →

- Plattsburgh State College, Plattsburgh, NY: current
- High School Equivalency Diploma, Elmira, NY: 2014
- Elmira CF Automotive Shop, 1,500 hours of training, Elmira, NY: 2011
- Henry Hudson High School, Electrical Shop, Automotive Shop, Mechanical Drawing, New York, NY: 2009

2 →

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE, 2011–2014

- NAACP, Elmira Correctional Facility
- Treasurer, Merrick Jaycees, Merrick Correctional Facility
- Transitional Services Assistant, Little Kills Correctional Facility

WORK EXPERIENCE

3 →

Station Attendant, AA Station, Bronx, NY: 2020–2022

- Pumped gas and performed light auto-body repair on various types of vehicles
- Supervised a small team of attendants

House Painter, 18 months experience: 2017–2019

- Prepared all surfaces for painting for 3,000+ sq ft buildings and utilized rollers, brushes, and sprayers
- Cleaned and maintained all painting equipment and safely stored all items

Electrical & Maintenance Crew, Rehabilitation of Chemung County Fire House: Summer 2014

- Responsible for electrical wiring and new window installation

Jewelry Vendor, NYC: 2009–2010

- Supported owner in selling merchandise at neighborhood events, community centers, and flea markets
- Assisted customers with questions, conducted transactions, and balanced cash box at end of shift

Notes to Sample Resume I

David Cooper spent three years, from 2011–2014, incarcerated in New York State correctional facilities. In his resume, he has used his experience to his best advantage.

- 1→** Show that while in prison you've done constructive things with your time. Mention any educational achievements or work experience you've had while incarcerated.
- 2→** If you've been involved in any organized prison activities or programs, list them. They help indicate to a prospective employer your personal growth and development while incarcerated.
- 3→** Consolidate and make use of your short-term employment experience. Six three-month painting jobs over a two-year period can be presented as "18 months experience."

Sample Resume II: Chronological Resume

Hector Diaz

718.555.5432 | hec.george@xahoo.com

Summary

Licensed Asbestos Worker with strong knowledge of safety practice and state regulations. Adept at working independently with limited supervision, or as a member of a professional waste material management team. Flexible scheduling, occasionally available to work third shift and weekends when needed.

Education

1 → Mid-Apple CF / Asbestos Abatement Program / 2017
Licensed Asbestos Handler

Ulster Community College / 2016
Associate Degree in Business Administration

US Army / 2008
Airframe and Powerplant License

Work Experience

Asbestos Handler / Mid-Apple CF / 2017–2022

2 → Responsible for removing asbestos materials in steam pipes, air ducts, heating plant equipment, and tunnels at nonprofit and county sites throughout Orange County. Worked closely with a team of six.

Manager / Puebla Market / 2009–2014

3 → Managed fresh produce and prepared foods department of medium-size neighborhood market. Responsible for sales, ordering, pricing, and display. Supervised and trained clerks and cashiers.

Salesman / Stein Sports / 2003–2007

Organized stock, created attractive displays of new items, controlled inventory, sold merchandise, and provided customer service for credit and returns.

Other Skills & Assets

4 → Fluent in Spanish, valid NYS driver's license, willing to travel

Notes to Sample Resume II

Hector Diaz spent 2014–2022 incarcerated at an upstate correctional facility. His training as an asbestos remover at the prison has provided him with marketable skills. Hector chooses to name the school upstate that granted him a degree, without mentioning that he received the degree while incarcerated. He lists the facility where he received his asbestos training only as “Mid-Apple CF,” not “Mid-Apple Correctional Facility.” This assures that information about his incarceration is not the first thing the employer will notice. After being offered a job, he will have the opportunity to explain his conviction and his personal growth while incarcerated.

- 1 →** Be sure to include all of the formal training and education you may have received, including courses in prison. It is to your advantage to show the prospective employer that you spent your time productively while incarcerated.
- 2 →** When listing your work experience, always emphasize your responsibilities on the job and the skills that you learned or needed to employ. Hector was sent with fellow asbestos workers from his facility to work in nonprofit and local government sites throughout the county. He makes reference to this as well as to the fact that he worked as part of a team.
- 3 →** Use action verbs for more effect (managed, supervised, trained, organized, sold, etc.).
- 4 →** Highlight the advantages that might be useful to your job (fluent in Spanish, driver’s license) or in explaining your flexibility (willing to travel).

Sample Resume III: Skills Resume

Jennifer Blake 718-555-1109 | jenb@xyzmail.com

SKILLS SUMMARY

1 →

Highly Organized

Three years experience planning and documenting daily schedules, meetings, and calendars: managed appointments for a team of 16 people; responsible for office supply arrangements; and lead organizer for weekly food drives.

Bookkeeping

Managed contract and price negotiations with office vendors, service providers, and office lease; ensured that all items are invoiced and paid on time; knowledge of QuickBooks.

2 →

Communication

Effectively communicated with suppliers, customers, and department heads; successfully utilized videoconferencing technologies, ensuring smooth communication for remote work.

Event Planning

Four years experience with planning on- and off-site activities: organized team building exercises, managed scheduling for conferences; oversaw fundraising and advocacy events, increasing donor response by 13% over one year period.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Volunteer Office Manager | SAFE Family Project, NY
2021–Present

Grievance Office Clerk | Rose M. Singer Center, NY
2019

Administrative Assistant | Southwell Health, NY
2015–2017

EDUCATION

3 →

Associate in Science Degree in Business Management
2021 | CUNY Hostos, NY

Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Excel Certification
2018 | New York Association of Management, New York, NY

4 →

Administrative Assistant Certificate
2015 | CUNY LaGuardia, NY

Notes to Sample Resume III

Jennifer Blake spent most of 2019 incarcerated on Rikers Island in New York City, convicted on a misdemeanor charge. Because she has gaps in her work history, Jennifer has decided to construct a skills-type (functional) resume. She focuses on the many skills she acquired through her volunteer experience and office work as a clerk and administrative assistant.

- 1 →** In choosing a skills-type resume, emphasize the skills you have learned from both your paid job experience and your unpaid job experience, including volunteer work. List your responsibilities and emphasize their importance in relation to your career objective.
- 2 →** An increasing number of jobs are now remote or hybrid. You may be working from home for all or part of your time. When updating your resume, include skills that highlight that you can successfully fulfill work duties at a workplace or independently from home.
- 3 →** Consider furthering your education. Many free or low-cost courses exist throughout the city in a variety of fields, including High School Equivalency and vocational skills. Listed on a resume, they will impress an employer and show that you are a person who wants to learn and has taken the initiative to do so.
- 4 →** Be sure to include all information that might be relevant to your job objective. Include certificates that highlight particular expertise and skills that are relevant to the job you are applying to.

How to Use a Resume

- You will likely need to email a copy of your resume to a prospective employer or upload a file directly to an employer's website. If you need help doing so, you can contact your public library.
- When interviewing in person, bring copies of your resume to leave a copy with the interviewer.
- Share copies of your resume with any job-placement agency with which you establish contact.
- Share copies of your resume with professional associates and parole or probation officers who may come across job openings and notify you.

Benefits of a professional email address

Creating a professional email address is very important, as it can have an impact on whether a candidate is interviewed or not.

Choose an email address format that is simple and professional. Common email formats include using your first and last name in various combinations. It may be difficult to get a professional email of your choice, as your first and last name may have been taken by someone else already. If this is the case, you can use a shorter version of your name, initials, or a mixture of the two. You can also use an underscore or period to separate the names. You also may want to make sure it is easy to share verbally with someone, over the phone or in person. It is best to not use your year of birth, your city, profession, or skill set in your professional email address as you may move or change jobs.

Common email formats include:

- Full name: nelsonjimenez@emaildomain.com
- First name with last initial: nelsonj@emaildomain.com
- First initial with last name: njimenez@emaildomain.com
- Full name with a period: nelson.jimenez@emaildomain.com
- First two letters in first name and middle name: neernesto@emaildomain.com
- Last name and first two letters in first name with an underscore: jimenez_ne@emaildomain.com

The definition of email domain is the web address that comes after

the @ symbol in an email address. For help and support with creating an email address, reach out to your local public library.

Ways to Look for a Job

This section outlines some of the ways to look for a job. You can start by reaching out to organizations listed in this book, especially in the *Organizations for Job Seekers* section, starting on [page 367](#).

Let people know you are looking for work

Sometimes jobs are filled by word of mouth. Let your friends, relatives, and community contacts know that you are looking for work. They can spread the word, and as soon as they hear of a job opening somewhere, they can let you know about it. Many times, jobs are filled when an employer hears about possible applicants through their personal network. This may happen even before new openings are advertised. Consider inquiring about a job at a local business, i.e. walk into the store and ask a manager if they are hiring.

Finding jobs online

It is important to know how to look for jobs online. Most companies advertise their job openings online and many companies only advertise their openings online. This is especially true for larger companies. You will need an email address to send your resume to employers, to sign into job search websites, and to complete online applications. You will also be asked to include an email address on paper applications. Public libraries and some community organizations can provide help with learning how to use and set up a free email account.

Job search websites are the most popular places online for job searching. Most require you to type in the name of a job or skill, and a list of current job openings will be shown based on that search.

Employers may look at resumes uploaded to job search and professional networking sites. Creating a jobseeker profile and uploading your resume can increase your chances of finding work.

Jobseeker profiles can be created on professional networking sites, or on most of the larger job search websites. Creating a profile on more than one site can increase your chances of being spotted by an employer. It also means you'll get emailed more often about job vacancies.

More information about computer literacy is on [page 54](#).

Contacting employers directly

Another way to learn where job openings are is to contact employers directly. By searching online, you can find the contact information of the businesses that interest you. If you know of a company that you would like to work for, you can check their website to see if they have any vacancies.

It is important to look for instructions on how to apply. If a company's website asks all applicants to apply online, follow those directions first. You can always follow up with a call or email later, but you do not want to be passed over for failing to follow the first direction.

Employment placement services

Employment placement services are similar to for-profit employment agencies in that they both provide job placement. Employment services, however, do not charge fees. They are usually attached to a government or community agency, a school, or a job-training program.

418 Go through the chapters *Organizations for Formerly Incarcerated People* and *Organizations for Job Seekers*. Many of the listings, such as the New York State Department of Labor–Job Services Division, are employment services. Others, such as the Center for Employment Opportunities (listed on [page 27](#)), offer job placement services. Note that some of the employment services listed specialize in job placement for specific groups, such as formerly incarcerated people, veterans, people recovering from substance use disorder, or people with disabilities.

Applying for a Job

Writing a Cover Letter

A cover letter is a one-page letter written to the person or organization offering the job you're applying for. A cover letter may not be needed for every job you apply to and certain industries do not generally use them for hiring. However, unless there are clear instructions not to send one, it is good practice to include a cover letter with your resume.

A well-written cover letter lets you introduce yourself, expand on topics covered in your resume, and showcase your writing skills. It is also a way to stand out from other people applying for the same job.

When writing a cover letter you should:

- Include the date of the letter
- Include the job title you are applying for and where or how you became aware of the opening
- Show that your skills and experience match the skills and experience needed to do the job
- Explain why you want the position and why you would be a good fit
- Include a phone number and email address where you can be reached to schedule an interview

When possible, address the cover letter to the director or head of a department by using the person's full name. To find this information you can search the company's website. Otherwise, "Dear Hiring Manager or Dear Human Resource Staff" is the best greeting. Avoid using a gendered greeting such as "Dear Sir or Madam".

The following is a sample of a job ad and cover letter:

Plumbing and heating wholesaler, AAA Plumbing seeks reliable, hardworking Warehouse Agents to join our team. Ideal candidates have work experience in a warehouse setting and working knowledge of receiving, handling, and distribution of freight is required.

- Ability to safely & skillfully operate a forklift (OSHA Forklift Certification required)
- Familiarity with the use of hand trucks, pallet jacks & other necessary warehouse equipment
- Solid communication skills
- Physical stamina & ability to lift or move at least 40 lbs.

Excellent opportunity and benefits.

Immediate full-time hire for the right candidate.

Job type: Full-time

[Apply Online](#)

Current date

Dear Deanna McDonald,

I would like to express my interest in applying for the Warehouse Agent position at AAA Plumbing, advertised on your website. As a self-directed and reliable professional, with experience performing a range of general warehouse operations and knowledge of plumbing, I possess skills that will make me an excellent fit for the Warehouse Agent Position.

My background includes successfully receiving shipments, unloading goods, verifying invoices, and stocking items while working collaboratively with peers and management to maximize productivity. Through my experience, I have become highly skilled at adhering to warehouse requirements while facilitating streamlined operations.

The following achievements demonstrate my qualification for this position:

- Valid NY State OSHA Forklift Certification
- Loading and unloading freight safely and efficiently by using various heavy machinery such as forklifts, pallet jacks, and other operating equipment.
- Evaluating inbound and outgoing product shipments to ensure quality control and accuracy.
- Demonstrating superior organizational, interpersonal, and time management abilities.
- Earning a reputation as an excellent team player and leader; regularly selected to train and mentor new hires.

My proven ability to optimize warehouse operations and team success, along with my solid skills in communication and problem solving, will contribute to the success of AAA Plumbing. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to speaking with you soon. I can be reached via phone at 718-555-0911 or email at njimenez@zmail.com.

Thank you in advance for your time,
Nelson Jimenez

Filling Out a Job Application

Many companies require a person to fill out a job application. To fill one out you will need to know a lot of detailed information about yourself, including your work and education history. It is a good idea to start gathering this information in advance, so you can have it ready and organized by the time you start looking for a job.

You can use the *Personal Fact Sheet* on [page 442](#) to record your information in order to save time and have important names, dates, and addresses all in one place.

Many job application forms are now available online and most large companies only use an online application process. To apply online you will usually need to create an account, which will require an email address and choosing a username and password. Some online job applications must be completed in a set amount of time and some have lengthy questionnaires. The staff at most public libraries can help you with setting up a free email account and applying to jobs online.

When filling out an application on paper, take your time. Make sure your writing is clear and neat. It is helpful to look over the entire application before you start writing anything down.

Try to answer all of the questions asked on the job application. If any do not pertain to you, it is still recommended you put something in the space provided, such as “N/A” (Not Applicable). For example, if you have never served time in the military, you may write “N/A” where asked about military experience.

Review the guidelines detailed on [page 397](#) to learn more about answering questions related to your conviction and avoiding discrimination.

Job applications are usually divided into four major categories:

- Personal Information
- Educational Background
- Work Experience/Employment History
- References

Personal information

You will need to have available:

- Your current address
- A phone number where you can be reached
- An email address

You are also likely to be asked if you are 18 or older, if you are legally allowed to work in the US, and whether you have served in the military.

Educational background

You will need to know information for every school or training program you have attended from high school, onward. This includes a school's address, the years that you attended, and the type of degree, diploma, or certificate you received.

Include any other type of classes or school you have attended. For example, if you have taken a professional development class or attended trade or vocational school, include that information. If you've taken college classes, but have not received a degree, write the degree you are working toward and expected graduation date.

Work experience/employment history

For this section, you will list your employment history starting with the most recent and going back. For each, be prepared to give the name of the company or employer, its location, the dates when you were employed, the type of work you performed, your title, and the reason for leaving.

You can also list unpaid work in this section. For example, if you have ever tutored, helped someone renovate their house, or volunteered for a community group.

For suggestions on how to account for time incarcerated in your work history, see the *Resume* section on [page 406](#).

References

References are people your potential employer can contact to find out more about you. They are people who are familiar with your work or your character in a professional or educational setting. They can be current or former employers, supervisors, or teachers. It is best not to use friends or family members as references.

Make sure you know their full name, job title, and current contact details and let them know you are listing them as a reference. This prepares them for the possibility that they will be contacted and asked to say or write a few words in your support. They will be most prepared to support you if they know what type of work you are looking for and if they have a current copy of your resume.

On the following page is a sample of a job application. Other information that may be asked includes salary expectations, hours you are available to work, and previous supervisor's name and contact information.

Employment Application

Please complete both pages. Please use ink and print clearly.

Personal Information

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Street Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone #: _____ Other #: _____

Email: _____ Preferred Name: _____

Are you eligible to work in the US? Yes No

Are you 18 or over? Yes No

Education

Institution/ School Name	Type of School	Area of Study	Certificate/ Degree and Completion Date

APPLYING FOR A JOB

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Employment History

List below your three most recent employers, beginning with the current or most recent one. If you have had fewer than three employers, include any relevant volunteer work.

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Job Title: _____

Type of work: _____

Date started: _____ Date left: _____ Why did you leave? _____

Company Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Job Title: _____
Type of work: _____
Date started: _____ Date left: _____ Why did you leave? _____

Company Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Job Title: _____
Type of work: _____
Date started: _____ Date left: _____ Why did you leave? _____

References

Name: _____
Company/Job Title: _____
Phone number: _____

Name: _____
Company/Job Title: _____
Phone number: _____

To the best of my knowledge, the above information is correct. I understand that the employer may wish to investigate employment history by questioning my references and former employers, and I have no objection to this. I understand that my employment is subject to a 90 day probation period.

Signature: _____

Interviewing for a Job

Interviews are a chance for an employer to learn more about you and determine how well you are qualified to fulfill the requirements of the job. At the same time, the interview allows you the opportunity to assess whether or not the job is right for you, and to demonstrate how your skills or qualifications can be a positive asset to the employer.

If you make a good impression during the interview, you may get the job—even if you don't have all the qualifications. On the other hand, if you make a bad impression, chances are you will not be offered the position, no matter how good your qualifications.

Preparing for the job interview

Job interviews can be stressful, but practicing and being well prepared can help you feel more confident.

The following tips and techniques can help you perform well in an interview:

- Prepare for interview questions
- Learn about the company
- For in-person interviews: bring the materials you will need, arrive early, and be patient
- For remote interviews: test the technology, and set up the space and environment
- Wear professional clothing

Preparing for interview questions

One way to prepare for an interview is to think about how you will answer questions you might be asked. Practice answering common interview questions, individually and with other people. You can write down answers to hypothetical questions as well. Take your time with your answers; it's okay to pause and think. Every answer you give should reflect how you are qualified for the job. The answer you provide should describe important and relevant highlights from your work background that relate to the job. Avoid answering questions with your personal history. When an interviewer says, "Tell me about yourself," what they are really looking

for is how your past work experience and skill set make you qualified for the job in question.

Some common interview questions are: Why do you want to work here? Tell me about a challenge or conflict you faced at work, and how you dealt with it? How do you work with others?

There are many websites that provide lists of common interview questions, such as www.glassdoor.com/blog/common-interview-questions.

Indeed's Career Guide, found online at www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing, is a website for jobseekers that includes a section dedicated to common interview questions with examples of how best to answer them.

Be prepared to talk about what you see as your major strengths and weaknesses. Avoid personal factors that have no relevance to performing the job in question. When discussing a weakness, show not only that you are aware of the problem, but the measures you have taken to help solve it. For example, "In my last job, because we relied on paper and used the old software for years, I had limited experience using Microsoft Office. Because I always want to keep my technology skills up to date, I took it upon myself to learn Microsoft Office products in free classes I found in my community. Overall, I took 100 hours of training in Excel, Word, and Outlook, in order to feel confident and comfortable using the software."

Review the guidelines detailed on [page 397](#) to learn more about answering questions related to your conviction and avoiding discrimination.

It is important to know what information is illegal for an employer to ask about during an interview.

Questions about your home life, about parenting or caretaking duties, or health needs may be phrased in ways that seem relevant to the job and appropriate to ask, but in fact any questions about your personal life are illegal for an employer to ask in an interview. You do not have to disclose information such as marriage status, roommate situation, whether or not you have children or are a

caretaker, information about your physical or mental health, or your home life. If you are asked personal questions, it is best to decline to answer in a polite and professional way such as, “Whether I am working remotely or in person, I have organized my schedule so that it won’t interfere with my work responsibilities.”

Learn about the company

Before the interview, it is very helpful to learn about the company and the job for which you are applying. Employers like it when you show them you understand what they do, how they do it, and what their challenges are. It will help you to better explain why you want to work for that particular employer and what attracted you to the job. This information can usually be found on the company’s website, sometimes on the About Us page or History page. It is also helpful to read a company’s Mission Statement, often located on the About Us page. The mission of The New York Public Library, for example, is “to inspire learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen communities.” The Mission Statement will give you a general idea of the personality and purpose of the company and give you a chance to explain how you fit into the company’s culture.

Make a list of all the important questions you would like to ask at the job interview. They might include: What are the work hours? What are the opportunities for advancement? What benefits does the company offer? What are the challenges associated with the job? Don’t be afraid to ask questions, but keep them relevant. It reflects interest on your part.

In-person interviews

What you need to bring: Be sure to bring a pen, paper, and extra copies of your resume. You may also want to bring your *Personal Fact Sheet* from [page 442](#), in case you are asked to complete a paper application form at your interview. Write down the name and phone number of the person who will interview you and have it with you in case you need to reach them. Bring any special documents you think you may need.

Arrive early and be patient: Being late for a job interview creates a very bad impression. Double-check the date and time of the interview. It is best to go into the interview about 10 minutes ahead

of the scheduled time, but plan to get to the location 30 minutes early to account for any delays.

Plan out how you will get to the interview location the day before. If you are taking public transportation, you may want to call the **Transit Authority** at **511** for information on the best route to take or for schedules. You can also visit the trip planner at <https://new.mta.info>.

When you arrive, be polite. Avoid any lengthy exchanges with the receptionist or others who may be waiting. Be patient if you are not called in for the interview at the exact time agreed upon. Use the time to review and compose your thoughts.

It is impossible to tell how long an interview will take. If you need to plan two interviews on the same day, make sure you have enough time in between them, so you will not be late to the second one.

Remote interviews

Test the Technology: Be sure to familiarize yourself with whatever technology is being used. You may need to download or update a video conferencing platform. Do this ahead of time to avoid any last minute technical difficulties. Check your video and audio settings well before the interview. You may want to conduct a practice run. Every platform has different setting options and you will want to make sure you are familiar with them before the interview.

Set up: Try to face the brightest source of light available. Do not place the source of light behind you. Make sure that the camera angle is head-on and at eye level. Using a desktop or laptop computer is preferable over a cell phone. If you don't have access to a home computer, some libraries offer spaces for remote interviews. See [page 372](#) for more information.

Limit Distractions: Find the quietest space you have available for your interview. Use earphones to limit background noises. During a video interview, find a space where the background is not distracting or overcrowded, so that you are the focus of the interview. Be aware of what is visible on camera because your surroundings can reveal personal information about you or your family.

Professional clothing

Whether in-person or remote, part of presenting yourself well for a job interview involves dressing neatly in clean and unwrinkled clothes. Dressing professionally shows the employer that you are taking the interview seriously and makes a good impression. This is important even if clothes are not important for the job (for instance if you will be supplied a uniform or if it is a job where people get dirty).

Think about what you would wear on a typical work day in the job you are applying to and then come to the interview dressed one step more conservatively than that. For example, a nice pair of slacks, and a shirt or sweater would be appropriate for interviewing for an auto technician—where jeans and a shirt would be the typical daily attire. A suit or dressy shirt and pants are appropriate attire for most office position interviews.

Look up Clothing in the index of this book for organizations that provide free professional clothing to job seekers.

Helpful points for interviews

- Be professional
- Listen attentively
- Be clear, complete, and brief
- Be positive in your approach
- Avoid the negative

Be professional

Show the interviewer professional respect. Don't chew gum or stare at the clock or your watch. Turn your phone on silent and do not use it during the interview. Never debate with the interviewer, even if they seem aggressive in their approach.

Listen attentively

During the interview, try to be relaxed and listen carefully to what the interviewer has to say. It's perfectly normal to be nervous during an interview. Be engaged and practice active listening by hearing out full statements before formulating your answer. It's okay to take your time.

Be clear, complete, and brief

Be professional with the language you use. Always answer with

more than just “yes” or “no.” Think before answering to give succinct and specific information about yourself.

Be positive in your approach

It is important that you highlight your qualifications during the interview. Appear confident but never exaggerate your experience or skills. If the interviewer fails to ask you something you feel is important, fill in the gap. If you are asked to talk about yourself generally, discuss the things that pertain to the job for which you are applying.

Avoid the negative

Keep personal problems to yourself. Do not talk about your home or financial problems. The interviewer is interested in finding a dependable and qualified person to fill the position. Emphasize what you can do, not what you can't. Never apologize for lack of education or experience. There are many skills and talents you have developed that you can discuss in a professional way.

If you've been fired from a job, be prepared to explain what happened if you are asked about it. Recognize the mistakes that were made, but show how you have learned from them. Never speak negatively about your former employers, even when asked about challenges you faced in previous jobs. If you stayed on jobs for only short periods of time, perhaps you quit to go back to school, or to look for a better-paying job with more responsibilities.

If you didn't finish school, explain the decision in a positive way. You can explain, “I left school because I accepted a job to earn money to support my family.” Mention any classes or training programs you have attended since leaving school, or any that you may have planned for the near future.

Discussing a conviction in an interview

In New York City, it is illegal for an employer to ask you about your conviction history. A background check can be conducted only after a job offer is made. Learn more about this law, the Fair Chance Act, on [page 398](#).

If you interview for a job outside of the five boroughs of New York City, you must be prepared to discuss your conviction with confidence and positivity. Do not mention the details of the conviction

or try to convince the employer of innocence. If the employer asks for specifics, state the charges for which you were convicted but do not elaborate or try to explain it away—it can sound false and will keep the focus on the negative. Be as brief as possible. For example, “I was convicted of felony sales of a controlled substance.”

Special consideration should be paid to the discussion of drug-related convictions. It is illegal for an employer to ask you whether or not you have a history of alcohol or substance use disorder. However, current illegal drug use is not protected under employment discrimination law, and employers can ask if an applicant is currently using illegal drugs.

Employers like to see that a person can take responsibility for choices made in the past because it shows personal reflection, growth, and a desire for change. State that you’ve changed. It can be as simple as saying, “I’m a different person today.” Explain how you’ve changed by listing the concrete positive steps you’ve made in your life. This can cover a wide variety of areas—education, military service, work history, volunteer activities, and/or skills obtained inside or outside of prison.

Ending the interview

Remember, the interview is also an opportunity for you to learn more about the potential job and employer. At the end of the interview, you can ask any thoughtful questions you have already prepared during your research or any clarifications you may need about something that was brought up in the interview. For example, you may want to ask the interviewer what they think is the main challenge of the job or if they offer opportunities for training. Usually, it is not a good idea to ask about details like lunch hours or vacations, unless the interviewer brings them up. If you are asked to discuss salary expectations, be prepared and be realistic. To see the average salary for a particular type of job, you can check the **Occupational Outlook Handbook** website at www.bls.gov/ooh, but remember it is illegal to be asked about your salary history in NYC.

In most instances, the decision on whether or not to hire you will not happen at the interview. If no indication is given about when

you can expect to hear from the company, ask about the notification process.

At the end of the interview thank the interviewer for the opportunity to be interviewed. Remember to remain professional until you've left the building.

Follow-up thank you email

Within 24 hours after the interview, send the employer a brief and professionally written email to thank them again for the opportunity to be interviewed. This shows the employer that you are serious about the job. It will help you stand out amongst your competitors, and many hiring managers/interviewers pay attention to how well, and how rapidly, you write a thank you email after the interview.

In addition, you can include any important information that you forgot to mention during the interview, as well as clear up anything that you feel you did not explain or present effectively during the interview. Be sure to proofread your email before sending it to check for grammatical and spelling errors. At your local library, a staff member can help you write and edit your email.

A thank you email should:

- Include information that reminds the interviewer of your conversation. For example, mention something you discussed that you found interesting, or highlight something the interviewer liked about you.
- Convey your enthusiasm for the position.
- Be concise. Keep your message to one or two paragraphs (3–4 sentences for each).
- Address any issues you feel need resolution, or concerns expressed by the interviewer.
- Identify next steps. End your email with another “thank you,” and summarize any next steps discussed during your interview.

The following is an example thank you email.

Hi Deanna,

Thank you so much for meeting with me today. I really enjoyed learning more about the job at AAA Plumbing, and hearing about your experience working for the company. I am very excited about the opportunity to join your team as a Warehouse Agent.

I can tell AAA Plumbing is a special place to work, and I would be thrilled to lend my skills to such an innovative, hardworking, and passionate team of individuals. Please let me know if there is anything else I can provide to make your hiring decision easier. I can be reached at 212-555-0911.

Best regards,
Nelson Jimenez

After the Interview

The Job Offer

There are several factors to take into consideration before accepting a job offer. If the job you have been offered isn't exactly what you wanted, it may still be worthwhile to accept the offer and learn as much as you can and make money while you continue to look for another job. Additionally, potential employers may be more interested in candidates who are currently employed, rather than between jobs.

Job potential

Ask yourself whether the job will challenge you. Will you be given the opportunity to work your way up to positions of more responsibility and higher pay? Will you be in a good place financially, even if you are looking for other opportunities? Try not to lose sight of your long-term goals and continue to work toward them, even if you find yourself at a job that does not live up to your expectations.

Salary or hourly wage

How much you are getting paid is an important factor when considering a job offer. Find out about your hourly wage, whether you will be receiving a fixed salary each pay period, or whether you will be dependent on commissions or tips. Also, find out if the employer offers overtime pay, and if you may be asked to take overtime shifts.

When choosing between two jobs, a person will not always decide to take the one offering the highest pay. Other important factors include working conditions, benefits, better hours, an easier commute, and more opportunities for training or job advancement.

Benefits

Benefits are what you receive from an employer in addition to your wages. They may include medical insurance, paid sick leave, paid holidays and vacation, parental leave, a wellness plan, uniforms and special equipment needed on the job, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, or tuition assistance for continuing education. It is important to find out what benefits are offered at the job you are considering, and what costs you would be required to cover on your own.

Other factors to consider

- Commuting time and costs
- Working conditions, such as hours, weather, noise levels, lighting, and dust
- Safety factors, such as risks of injury and safety precautions
- Social environment, workplace culture, and coworkers

Adjusting to a New Job

Be dependable and responsible

Do not be late for work or be absent without communicating your reason and giving advance notice. If commuting, get to know exactly how long your commute is and allow for extra time. Always expect transportation delays. If you are going to be late, or can't make it to work, call in immediately. If you offer to do a task or are asked to do one, make sure it gets done. Don't promise to do more than you can reasonably handle.

Be patient

When you first begin a new job, there is a lot to be learned, no matter what the job is. It's normal to be nervous during the first week or two. Your employer wants you to do well and communicating with them could help you adjust to a new role.

Follow directions

If you need to understand something better, don't be afraid to ask questions. Your success as an employee will be judged to a large extent on your ability to listen and follow directions.

Getting along with coworkers

Performing your job assignment is only one aspect of job adjustment. Equally important is your ability to get along with your coworkers and/or the public you serve. If a problem occurs at work, practice professional communication and discuss the issue with your boss. If your workplace has a Human Resources department, that is where you would report serious issues like abuse, discrimination, or harassment. You can also contact the NYC Commission on Human Rights (the full listing is on [page 233](#)).

Learn from constructive criticism

Constructive criticism and performance reviews are a part of every job. Try not to take critical feedback personally when it is about your job functions and responsibilities. Although it takes practice, listening to feedback is an important part of the workplace.

Create boundaries between personal life and work

Work often offers you the opportunity to socialize with coworkers, and socializing is an important feature of the total work experience. Still, it is important to remember that while you are at work, your time is not your own. If personal issues arise that interfere with work, create solid boundaries to keep them separate. For example, talking with coworkers about your personal affairs can end up jeopardizing both of your jobs if your work is negatively impacted.

Leaving a Job

If you decide your current job is not the right fit, it is a good idea to try to secure another job before leaving. The job market is competitive in NYC and securing a new job will take time. Employers generally prefer choosing job applicants from those who are already employed.

If you quit a job, be sure to give your current employer at least two weeks' notice. It is important to be professional when leaving a job so that they will be more likely to give you a good recommendation for your next job.

Some things to think about

- Is your job covered by unemployment insurance? If so, will you be eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits?
- If you were laid off or fired, do you have any recourse? Can you appeal the decision to anyone in the HR department or union?
- If you were laid off or fired, is there any severance pay that you can collect?
- What will happen when you leave the job in terms of your pension, your health insurance coverage, and your unused vacation and sick time?

Unemployment Insurance and Benefits

Unemployment Insurance (UI) provides temporary financial help to workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. Generally, workers who quit or get fired are not eligible for UI. If you suddenly find yourself unemployed, you may be eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. If you are eligible, you must declare yourself willing and able to work and actively looking for new work while receiving unemployment benefits.

Visit <https://dol.ny.gov/unemployment/unemployment-insurance-assistance> for more information or to apply online. You can also call **888.209.8124** (Spanish spoken) for information on unemployment insurance. If applying in person, you will be asked by the local unemployment office to begin by bringing in your Social Security card and one or two other pieces of identification. (A pay stub from your former job is also helpful.) If you are eligible for benefits, there is a 2- or 3-week processing period, after which you will receive cash benefits (an amount proportionate to the salary you received and the amount of time you worked) for at least 26 weeks.

While unemployed, you may also be eligible to receive other types of benefits. These can include SNAP (food stamps) or Medicaid (see the *Financial Assistance* chapter starting on [page 104](#)), or union benefits if you were a dues-paying member of a union where you last worked. You may also be eligible for programs made to help people find work or further their education and training.

Personal Fact Sheet

Name: _____

Email: _____

Education

	Name and Location	Area of Study	Degree Received & Date
High School:	_____	_____	_____
Vocational:	_____	_____	_____
College:	_____	_____	_____
Other Training:	_____	_____	_____

Employment/Work Experience

	Company Name & Location	Name of Supervisor	Dates From/To	Reason For Leaving
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

References

Name	Company/Job Title	Phone Number
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Additional Information (volunteer work, certificates, languages spoken)

Record of Job Contacts Made

Name of Company

Address

Phone/Email

Name of Contact Person

Date & Time of Appointment

Travel Directions

Comments

Name of Company

Address

Phone/Email

Name of Contact Person

Date & Time of Appointment

Travel Directions

Comments

Name of Company

Address

Phone/Email

Name of Contact Person

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2025 Calendar

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