

The New York Public Library

Connections

2024 A free guide for formerly incarcerated people in New York City



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Edited by

Kate Heenan



New York
Public
Library

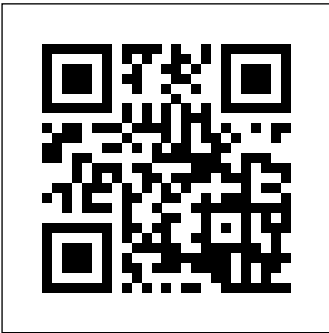
Connections 2024

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 2024 is available as a PDF online at:

nypl.org/jps



CONNECTIONS 2024
2



The New York Public Library, 2024.

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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 2024 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Please be advised that the moment *Connections* is printed, it is out of date. This is especially true as the impact of COVID-19 will continue to be felt in unpredictable ways and may impact the organizations in *Connections* and the services they provide.

We highly encourage everyone to contact organizations before visiting in person to confirm operating hours, services (in-person or remote), and any mask or other types of requirements in order to have the most up-to-date information.





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 useful tools readers can also use to find the resources they need.

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 2025 edition of *Connections*, by writing to:

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

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Many thanks go to Dr. Clover A. Perez, Hyseem “Bishop” McIndoe, and Jose Hamza Saldana 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 19 currently and formerly incarcerated artists throughout this book. Our beautiful cover art was created by Abida Mcintosh. 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 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.

Contents

- Profiles 10**
- COVID-19 20**
 - Introduction 21
 - Information on COVID-19 21
- Formerly Incarcerated People 28**
 - Resources Similar to *Connections* 29
 - Reentry Task Force by NYS County 30
 - Organizations 33
 - Advocacy, Organizing, & News Resources 45
 - Clean Slate Act 50
- Education 52**
 - Adult Literacy, HSE, & ESOL 53
 - Computer Literacy 61
 - Continuing Education 62
 - Financial Aid 67
 - College Programs in Prison 73
- Housing 81**
 - Shelters 82
 - Intake Centers for Single Adults 82
 - Drop-In Centers for Single Adults 84
 - Securing Shelter for Homeless Families 86
 - Halfway & Three-Quarter Housing 90
 - Organizations for People Without Homes 91
 - Housing Assistance 97
 - Rentals 99
 - Tenant Rights & Housing Discrimination 101

Financial Assistance	106
Public Benefits	108
Temporary Cash Assistance	110
Emergency Assistance	111
Food Stamps (SNAP)	111
Food	112
Clothing	114
Health Insurance Assistance	114
Victim Assistance	115
Financial Counseling	116
Physical & Mental Health	121
Free & Low-Cost Medical Care	124
General Health Information Resources	128
Helplines: Physical Health	129
Health Insurance	130
HIV & AIDS	132
AIDS Discrimination	137
Hepatitis C	138
Mental Health	139
Resources & Counseling Related to Sexual Violence	144
Helplines & Other Mental Health Resources	148
Therapy Resources	152
Addiction	154
Treatment Programs & Organizations	155
Support Groups	164
Resources & Other Services	166
Helplines	167
Harm Reduction	167

Legal	172
Police Interactions: Know Your Rights	173
Protest Safety & Rights	178
Digital Policing & Surveillance	180
Representation & Assistance	186
Research Resources	197
Bail	199
Locating Someone in Custody	203
Voting Registration & Rights	205
Obtaining Personal Documents	210
Information for People Convicted of a Sex Offense	214
Discrimination, Grievances, & Rights	216
Less Is More Act (LIM)	222
HALT Solitary Confinement Act	224
Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)	226
Immigrants	234
Immigration Law & Enforcement	235
Who is at Risk From ICE	235
Know Your Rights	236
Emergency Planning	240
Asylum Seekers	240
Organizations	241
Veterans	255
Veteran Benefits & Incarceration	256
Organizations	258
People with Disabilities	265
Rights While Incarcerated	266

Organizations	268
Women	277
Organizations	278
Helplines	286
Older People	288
Organizations	289
Medical Care	293
Housing	294
LGBTQI+	296
Protections Against Discrimination	297
Organizations & Resources	299
Rights for Incarcerated TIGNC People	308
Youth	311
Raise the Age	312
Organizations & Resources	314
Working Papers	327
Foster Care & Social Security Benefits	328
Parents & Caregivers	329
Organizations & Resources	330
Custody Rights for Incarcerated Parents	339
Child Support	343
Additional Hotlines & Directories	347
The Job Search	348
Index	424
Notes	442
2024 Calendar	447

Profiles

REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT CONQUERS ALL OBSTACLES.

— MARTIN SOSTRE

DR. CLOVER A. PEREZ

WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.



A justice system must be first and foremost about humanization.

Prior to my incarceration, I knew nothing about prison other than what I saw in the media. It wasn't until my arrest in 2009 and my conviction in 2011 that I began to understand the many social and political obstacles that block the path to achieve equal justice and safety within our criminal justice system.

Immediately after I was convicted, I was remanded and sent to Brooklyn Detention Center (MDC) where I spent nine months before I was finally sentenced in January 2012. Hearing the Judge say, "I'm sentencing you to 121 months (10 years and 1 month) in prison," was beyond my comprehension. I struggled to hold back the tears that rolled down my cheeks, but quickly brushed the tears away while I struggled to maintain a steady breath.

I was immediately transferred back to MDC, Brooklyn and stayed there for another four months. I was officially designated to Danbury Federal Correctional Institution in May 2012. The first two weeks went by torturously slow. Each day I struggled to go on. Most days as I walked through the prison compound, I felt like I was walking to my execution. It took everything in me not to break down on the compound. Finally, after 8 horrific months, I was transferred up the hill to the prison camp.

The walk up the hill to the camp was surreal. I felt free, like a bird out of a cage. No more fence, no more lockdowns, and no ten-minute moves. It took me less than five minutes to walk up the hill from the FCI to the camp. The camp didn't look like a prison. It resembled a summer school with the most spectacular view overlooking a lake and the surrounding valleys, and that became my new community for seven and a half years.

The camp came with its own set of obstacles, but I decided that I would not let either the situation or the environment define me. I had a choice. I could choose to accept the conditions as they existed or accept responsibility for changing them. Trying to change the conditions is what I set out to do. Noticing that there was no child-friendly environment for visiting at the camp, I was determined to make sure that the camp established a Children's Center. It took months going back and forth with the Education Department and the Religious Services Department, before finally they agreed to use the Chapel as a Children's Center during visiting hours. For the first time, mothers and grandmothers had the opportunity to spend time with their children and grandchildren in a kid-friendly environment during the camp's designated visiting hours.

12 PROFILES Additionally, I drafted a proposal, which I also presented to the Education Department, to have outdoor visits. Within weeks the proposal was approved. The day of the camp's initial outside visit was amazing with almost the entire camp participating. We played games such as hide-and-seek, potato-sack races, and so on. There were booths where the children could make pictures, bracelets, and finger painting. The kitchen department provided cookies, punch, and hot dogs so the children could enjoy their time. It was such a joyful occasion but also very emotional. For some of the women at the camp, it had been years since they had been able to interact with their children and grandchildren on the outside. The success of that day made it possible for us to have other outdoor gatherings.

Being at the camp didn't lessen the pain I felt being away from my family and I still had to pull myself together to do the time that was ahead of me. One of the conditions of being at the camp is that everyone had to work in a camp-designated job. To this end, I worked in the Leisure Library as a clerk. It was at that time I

began to realize that most of the women and young girls who were released were coming back to prison. Having witnessed firsthand an influx of returnees, and not understanding why, I began having an open conversation with some of the women to find out why they were returning to prison, when I wanted so much to go home. What I found out was very sobering! Upon their release to a halfway house to finish the remainder of their sentence, they are violated for not having a cell phone to contact the halfway house when they leave for job searches. Violated for not having the proper clothing for job interviews, or even the proper resources to build on. Hence, they are violating the terms of their release and sent back to prison.

Not wanting that to be my situation upon my release, I led an initiative within the incarcerated community to help others, and thus, A Beautiful HEART Ministries (ABHM) was birthed. ABHM provided essential products and resources to those going home to help with their reentry. The resources were made available through money donated by friends and family members. The money was used to purchase toiletries and other items from commissary. These items were placed in care packages and given to the women and girls upon their release. Additionally, I was able to connect the women and girls returning to New York to my family and friends who then purchased cell phones, metro cards and clothing to help with their transition. With prayer and practice, ABHM's mission was revealed.

Upon my release in 2019, ABHM was reorganized, then scaled, to provide reentry services to women and girls returning from prison. Since 2019, ABHM has served approximately 4,500 formerly incarcerated women, girls, and gender-fluid individuals in New York, Baltimore, Maryland, Pennsylvania, California, Washington DC, Washington State, Connecticut, and Maine. ABHM also provided care packages to over 720 incarcerated women and girls in State prisons.

Since my release, I have amassed a litany of accomplishments. I was accepted into the Justice-In-Education Initiative Program at Columbia University, testified in Congress on the First Step Act, started Clover Me'She Designs, a clothing line that promotes self-love, and most recently received my Doctorate Degree in Philosophy.

HYSEEM “BISHOP” MCINDOE



WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.

Growing up in Bed-Stuy, it was fun and dangerous at the same time. It definitely taught me a lot. When I was younger I lived in a three bedroom apartment with my mom, my two brothers, and two sisters. For the most part it always felt like we had everything we needed. It was cool, really. There weren't any problems, just what I would call regular *hood problems*. Some of those problems came from our relationship with the police. One of the first interactions I ever had with the police was when an officer came to our apartment on a noise complaint, and he threatened to spray mace at my mom. Something I remember clearly was that he was black cop. I wondered if he felt like he had to prove himself more than other cops. Maybe he felt like he had to do more to show that he was down. I remember feeling violated, with another man coming into my house and me being too small to do anything about it.

Another formative memory I have from that time was when one of my friends got shot near my block. He was an older guy. He was shot in his rear end, and he was laying on a stretcher about to be taken to the hospital. The person who shot him came back to the scene and, because he knew us and knew that we'd seen him do

it, all my friends were running. But I remember I was just standing there, watching it all unfold. I could have gotten killed that day.

Even though I had experiences in my life that were crazy or hard to deal with in the moment, I also always had art. I was in jail for three months before I got brought into Artistic Noise, the nonprofit art space where I'm now the Artist In Residence. I heard about the program from a woman named Francesca, who was an art therapist with Artistic Noise. She came into the jail and made art with people inside. But even before I started working with Artistic Noise, I knew that I was good at making art. Even when I was a little kid. One day I was drawing in class and everybody stopped doing what they were doing just to watch me draw. It was a picture of Spiderman and everyone wanted to watch *me* draw it. That was the very first time I realized that I was an artist. From there I just kept playing around with art, more and more, as I got older.

The first time that I displayed my art to the community in an art show, I showed a lot of different pieces of work and I sold out my entire section of the exhibit. I was surprised I sold every piece, but then I did it a couple more times after that. I feel like people respond to my art because it all comes directly from the heart. I'm trying to tell people to be open-minded and live and let live. My art is created from a place of freeness and freedom, and it tells people that they should be free in their own lives. I look forward to the next time I show my artwork in a gallery setting, and I appreciate everybody that helped me get this far and who have supported my artwork.

There was a time when I had just a couple of months to make ten brand new artworks. This was just recently. I didn't think I could do it. There were times when I was working on the projects and I just didn't feel creative. But I've learned to take a break, to walk away from the artwork for a bit. To take a new look at the canvas and to imagine that I was a person viewing it. What could I do to make this imagined person change their perspective? I tell young artists that even if you think people don't care about what you're doing now, if you keep up with it and keep expressing yourself, people will eventually come to appreciate it. And what does it matter if people care anyway? You just have to keep doing what you do. Some nights I don't even want to make art, but those are the exact

times that will determine how far you go with art. The times that you persevere and keep going. You have to make art even when you're stressed, even when you're having a bad day. You can't just make art when things feel good. You have to do it when things feel bad, too. Maybe even then most of all.



JOSE HAMZA SALDANA

WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.



My life-journey began in Harlem, in a settlement of migrant Puerto Ricans often referred to as El Barrio or Spanish Harlem, where I was born in 1951. I am a first-generation Black Puerto Rican. I received my elementary education at Holy Name School, a Catholic School run by White nuns who forbade me and my brothers from speaking Spanish anywhere in the school or playground. My first encounter with colonial oppression and racism. Still, I developed into an 'A' student with the childhood dream of becoming a baseball player. But greater forces and, I've come to learn, my shortcomings, led me in a different direction.

In the early dawn hours of July 3, 1979, on 148th Street in Harlem, a patrol car stopped a car I was a passenger in, a gun battle ensued and in the exchange of 'return' gunfire a patrol sergeant was shot in the face. I was arrested and convicted for attempted murder of a NYC police officer and sentenced to 25 years to life.

Sitting in prison cells in prisons across the State, I would often reflect on the events and circumstances that led to my predicament of serving a life sentence. I left four young children and an ailing mother. My children would grow up confronting the same

social, economic, and political conditions that I inherited, and I would not be there to prepare or guide them. My mom migrated from Puerto Rico to Harlem in the late 40s, in search of a better life. A journey that provided her much more difficulties than joy. We lived in perpetual poverty, and I can count the few times that I saw her happy.

After years of painfully exhausting all appeals and collateral challenges, denied certiorari in New York Court of Appeals and U.S. Supreme Court, I contemplated death, not suicide but the reality that I may die in prison. So many of my brothers were dying at a relatively young 57 to 61 years old. Systems of oppression have taken everything from me, except the one thing they can't take, no one can take from me. We can only lose it if we surrender it, and I will never surrender my dignity as a human being. As Allah is my Witness, I had vowed: Whether I die in a prison cell or as a free man, I will die an honorable man. This I have control over and can't be denied.

Into the second decade of my incarceration, I reconnected with my sister's best friend from our childhood years in El Barrio, who would become my wife and soulmate. I also learned that someone very dear to me had been abducted, sexually assaulted, shot in the head, then dumped on the street to die. She survived. This had a profound impact on me, something I couldn't shake. I was compelled to do some honest, deep soul-searching, examining the thinking and behavior that led me to make choices that harmed people. I had to ask myself, "Am I any better than the person who inflicted such horrendous harm on this young mother?"

I was involved with a group of men engaging in discussions on the impact of mass incarceration on Black and Brown families and communities. We were committed to developing viable strategies of empowerment. The same families and communities are also the most impacted by the cycle of interpersonal violence. We must be engaged in stopping this cycle of interpersonal violence, without relying on systems of oppressions. Long group discussion eventually evolved into Crime Victim Awareness Workshops and Anti-Violence Seminars. In the early 2000's I was invited to help

develop, A Challenge to Change (C2C): A dynamic and comprehensive therapeutic program designed to address harmful thinking, attitudes and behavior based on the cognitive-behavior model. Participants in C2C's 18-week intensive workshop learn to explore and address root causes of their thinking and behavior; learn how to accept full responsibility for the harm committed; and how to develop meaningful insight into the totality of the harm their behavior inflicted on families, communities, and society. Later we revised C2C to include a commitment to embracing the moral obligation to help stop the cycle of violence and repair harm in our communities.

This is the path that I've traveled for nearly three decades, behind pioneers and scholars who paved the way, and alongside others; all committed to being better human beings than when we came in, as integral to becoming our own liberators. Some, too many, never made it out. They died on the path of redemption.

In 2018 I walked out of Green Haven State Prison after 38 years of incarceration. Two of my brothers were there to pick me up. It was the happiest moment of my life. As I was about to get in the car, I turned around to look at the prison wall, that big, ugly grey wall, built not only to discourage thoughts of escape, but also to hide what goes on behind it. I didn't know what, if anything, I would be able to do for those who had already languished in prison for three to four decades. But one thing I did know; I was not going to go on with my life as if they no longer existed. I carry the memory of those who didn't make it, and the memory of those still languishing behind those walls and barbed wire fences across the State. They are my brothers and sisters.

Two weeks after I was released, I went to the RAPP office and rang the doorbell, Mujahid Farid answered. I introduced myself: "My name is Jose Hamza Saldana, I was just released from prison, and I am reporting for duty, Sir."

COVID-19

SMALL ACTS, WHEN MULTIPLIED BY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE,
CAN TRANSFORM THE WORLD.

— HOWARD ZINN



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY PEDRO CIRILO

Introduction

Please be advised that the moment *Connections* is printed, it is out of date. The impact of COVID-19 will continue to be felt in unpredictable ways and may impact the organizations in *Connections* and the services they provide.

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 will be limited. At the time of publication, testing, treatment, and vaccinations will continue to be provided to NYC residents, including to people who do not have insurance or the ability to pay.

We highly encourage everyone to contact organizations before visiting in person to confirm operating hours, services (in-person or remote), and any mask or other types of requirements in order to have the most up-to-date information.

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**—Call the **COVID-19 Hotline: 888.346.3065**, call the **Vaccination Hotline: 833.697.4829**, or visit <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

For **New York City**—Call **311**, text **COVID** to **692-692**, or 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, including testing sites and how to get free at-home COVID-19 tests:

For **New York State**—Call **888.346.3065** or visit <https://forward.ny.gov/covid-19-testing>.

For **New York City**—Call **311**, text **COVID TEST** to **855-48**, or visit www.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-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 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. 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.

At the time of publication three COVID-19 vaccines are used in the US: Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna which are COVID-19 mRNA vaccines, and Novavax COVID-19 vaccine which is a protein subunit vaccine. The J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine, a viral vector vaccine, has expired and is no longer available for use in the US as of May 2023.

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/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html.

Schedule a Vaccine Appointment

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

For **New York State**—Call **888.346.3065** or visit <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>.

For **New York City**—Call **311** or **212.268.4319**, or 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.

Vaccine Card Information

Vaccination cards include information about which COVID-19 vaccine you received, the date you received it, what lot number the vaccine is from, and where you received it. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has stopped printing and issuing new COVID-19 vaccination cards. It is still a good idea to keep your card if you have previously received one, as it may be needed for some employment, travel, school-related immunizations, and medical treatment recommendations from healthcare providers.

If you have lost or never received a card visit www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/locating_old_immun_records.htm.

New York City residents can visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/cir-parents-guardians.page.

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, so it is important to get tested and talk to your doctor right away.

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 **212.268.4319**.

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/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html or www.health.ny.gov/diseases/long_covid.

Several NYC hospitals have specialized clinics to provide follow-up care to people who had COVID-19. Post-COVID care clinics bring together clinical teams from different specialties (including pulmonology, cardiology, rehabilitation, neurology, and mental health) to provide comprehensive treatment. There are also rehabilitation and physical therapy clinics with specialized services for people recovering from COVID-19.

Visit www.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-whensick.page for a list of Post-COVID care clinics.

NYC Health + Hospitals has set up an AfterCare Resource Center where resources and information on obtaining healthcare and other support can be found available at <https://covid19.nychealthandhospitals.org/AfterCare>.

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

For eligibility and more information on burial assistance and financial help for COVID-19 related funeral expenses, including information about the FEMA Burial Services Program, visit www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/burial-assistance.page.

Formerly Incarcerated People

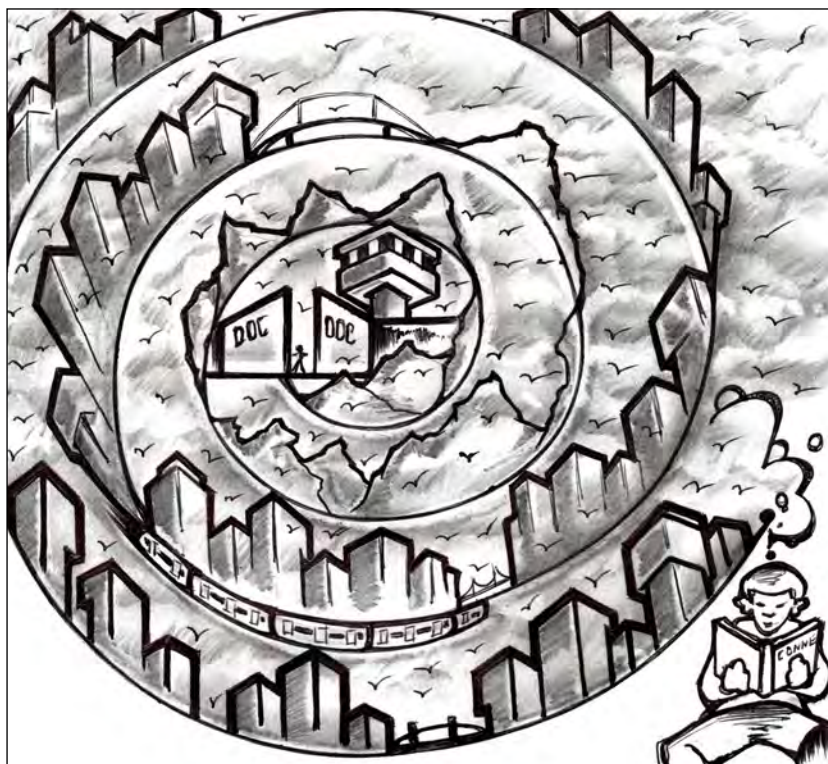
DON'T BE SAD, DARLING!

TO PUT ME IN PRISON, AS THEY DID, IS A VERY EASY THING!

BUT WHAT CAN THEY DO ABOUT THE SUN

SHINING OUTSIDE AND NURTURING NEW REBELS?

— RASHID HUSSEIN



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY S. LUCAS

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

<https://cflj.org>

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/outreach

North Country Reentry Resources

(Covers Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties)

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 Ex-offenders 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 www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/initiatives/offender_reentry.htm for updated information on services and contact information.

ALBANY COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Department of Mental Health

260 South Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12202

Telephone: 518.447.4555

BRONX COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O The Fortune Society

1074 Washington Avenue, Bronx, NY 10469

Telephone: 718.292.3851 x7327

BROOME COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

Prison and Jail Reentry Programs
206 State Street, Binghamton, NY 13901
Telephone: 607.743.1790

DUTCHESS COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O Exodus Transitional Community
97-99 Cannon Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Telephone: 845.452.7620 x119

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

C/O District Attorney's Office
210 Joralemon Street, 3rd Floor, 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 x0

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

C/O Department of Social Services, Economic Security
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: 718.906.2984

RENSELAER COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

C/O District Attorney's Office
80 2nd Street, Troy, NY 12180
Telephone: 518.270.4002

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 x220

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, 2nd Floor, White Plains, NY 10601
Telephone: 914.995.2791

Organizations

For programs specialized to serve youth, please see the *Youth* chapter starting on [page 311](#).

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. 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, 12th Floor, 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.brooklynda.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 NY State 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)   

www.cases.org

151 Lawrence Street, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 212.553.6300

Nathaniel Clinic
2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10027
Telephone: 212.553.6708

Provides services including alternative-to-bail, alternative-to-incarceration, mental health, substance use treatment, youth education and employment, and other support services for people across the spectrum of court-involvement.

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES (CCA) 


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

Promotes reintegrative justice and community-based alternative-to-incarceration programs. Services 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. 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 obtaining referrals from probation or parole officers if applicable.

CENTER FOR JUSTICE INNOVATION



520 8th Avenue, 18th Floor, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 646.386.3100

www.innovatingjustice.org

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.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY—CENTER FOR JUSTICE—JUSTICE THROUGH CODE

1190 Amsterdam Avenue, 219 Schermerhorn Hall, New York, NY 10027

www.centerforjustice.columbia.edu/justicethroughcode

A free semester-long coding course for formerly incarcerated and legal system impacted individuals. Provides free technology training and offers resume assistance, interview prep, and personal narrative development. Participants are expected to have familiarity and comfort with basic computer skills, but no prior coding knowledge is necessary. Works with partners to provide laptops for participants who do not own them, as laptops and/or home computers are required. Job/internship placement or pathways to additional job training is provided upon completion. Visit the website for more information and application forms.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY—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 118](#).

DEFY VENTURES

Provides employment readiness, reentry planning, personal development, and entrepreneurship training to individuals who are formerly and currently incarcerated.

See the full listing for Defy Ventures on [page 351](#).

DRIVE CHANGE

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

See the full listing for Drive Change on [page 352](#).

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, and 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 ARRIVE, ARRIVE Post-Graduate, Reentry Services Initiative, Drug Treatment Services, Third Way, Home and Community-Based Services, Center for Personal and Professional Development, and the Judith Loeb Chiara Recovery and Wellness Center. Can provide letters of reasonable assurance. 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 18 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 pro-

gramming, 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 319](#).

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.

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.


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, benefits assistance, educational services, family counseling, health services by referral, job placement, job readiness, job training, individual counseling, life-skills training, and substance use prevention. 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 Civil 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 194](#).

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

2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.324.5577

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, substance use treatment services (El Rio), young adult services, court advocacy services, support for families impacted by incarceration, housing support, elder reentry services, video visitation, and wellness and prevention 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.

QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—PRISON, JAILS, AND REENTRY OUTREACH



89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432

Telephone: 718.990.5104

www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/community-outreach/correctional-outreach

Provides information and connections to resources for people impacted by the criminal legal system. Provides assistance with obtaining a state ID through ID Assist. Formerly incarcerated individuals may be eligible for the Digital Connect program. The program provides technology skills and equipment, as well as connections to community resources. Offers an alternative to the courts system for young people through Youth Justice Court. Also publishes a Queens-specific Reentry Resource Guide, available on the website. Offers people in NYC DOC custody programming, library service, and reference service. Visit the website or email reentry@queenslibrary.org for more information on programs and services.

THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH—PRISON MINISTRY

490 Riverside Drive, New York, NY, 10027

Social Justice Office: 212.870.6700

www.trcnyc.org/ministries/prisonministry

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. 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 that provides a continuity of care for incarcerated students from prison to a transitional supportive

living community at Ignacio House of Studies. Program residents have access to scholarships to partnering universities and colleges and participate in job workforce training through enrichment activities. Call for more information and 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. Offers on-site legal services, primarily in family law, including child custody cases and other civil legal issues. 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

Hotline: 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 the hotline.

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: 929.390.8606

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

A member-based grassroots organization that works to build a mass movement to dismantle the prison-industrial complex. Publishes *The Abolitionist*, an inside-outside newspaper, corresponds via mail with people currently incarcerated, and provides political education.

The NYC chapter is currently organizing around the NY Dignity Not Detention campaign, which seeks to end ICE detention in NYS. Visit the website for more information.

ENVISION FREEDOM FUND—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.

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>

An incarcerated person-led worker union, fighting for fair working conditions for incarcerated people. IWW membership is free for incarcerated individuals. Contact to request information on forming a branch and to receive an application.

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 print publication distributed nationally in jails and prisons. *News Inside* contains a compilation of journalism about new legal developments, prison programs, stories that inspire hope, 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.

People who are currently incarcerated and interested in receiving *News Inside* directly, or who want to request that we reach out to their facilities to provide *Inside Story*, can write to

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

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 monthly meetings.

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 other resources such as research reports and privacy toolkits, available on the website.

WORTH RISES

168 Canal Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10013

<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 analyses. Organizes and leads campaigns that center on protecting and returning resources to directly-impacted communities.

Clean Slate Act

In 2023, the Clean Slate Act was signed into law. The law will take effect November 16th, 2024 and provides the New York State Office of Court Administration up to three years to implement the processes necessary to identify and seal all eligible records.

The following is from www.cleanslateny.org.

A person is eligible for relief under Clean Slate when:

- They have completed a three-year waiting period for misdemeanor convictions and eight-year waiting period for felony convictions, not counting time served in prison.
- They have completed probation or parole.
- They have no pending charges in New York.
- 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 eligible, the conviction records will be civilly sealed to allow people to access housing, education, and most jobs.

Clean Slate will not limit background checks for:

- **Law enforcement, prosecutors, and the courts:** Records will not be sealed for the criminal legal system. Police, prosecutors, defense counsel, judges, and court officials will continue to have access to sealed records.
- **Hiring police and peace officers:** Any prospective employer of a police or peace officer will have access to sealed records.

- **Gun licenses:** Local, state, and federal agencies and officers conducting background checks for firearm licenses will have access to sealed records.
- **The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV):** The DMV, as well as private transportation companies like Uber and Lyft, will have access to sealed records.
- **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 to do jobs overseen by the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

Education

AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CENSORED? IT MEANS BEING DENIED GROWTH AND HEALING. FOR HOW CAN WE GROW OR HEAL WITHOUT EACH OTHER? CENSORSHIP IS THE TYRANT'S TOOL.

— STEVIE WILSON



ARTWORK BY RAYMOND L. SKINNER

USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

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

In order to replace a copy of your New York State HSE diploma or transcripts, you must fill out the application found online at www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/duplicate-diplomas-andor-transcripts and send: (1) the completed application; and (2) a certified check or money order payable to the New York State Education Department

(either \$4.00 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. Please note that it takes approximately 8–10 weeks to receive a copy or replacement upon receipt of request.

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

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

Offers free English classes in two 10-week cycles for adults 18 and over. Classes are for beginner-, intermediate-, and advanced-level students. English to 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 Classes 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 Diploma External 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 immigration legal services through an ActionNYC partnership, along with referrals for more complicated 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 spe-

cific classes. Call for a list of classes, locations, and to register and determine placement.

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION & TRAINING PROGRAM

Gould Residence Hall, 2155 University Avenue, Room 410, 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 246](#).

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)—ADULT LITERACY/HSE/ESL 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.

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 EDUCATION 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.

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 363](#).

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. 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, and basic reading and math skills. Visit the website for 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, ESOL classes, and computer classes for people ages 19 and over. Instruction is offered in English and 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. Courses include Intro to Computers for Older Adults, Intro to the Internet, Creating an Email Account, and Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint). 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

Provides college and career programs to women with criminal legal system involvement. Academic scholarships and incentives such as transportation assistance, book assistance, and school supplies are provided per school semester for participants, and college counseling and financial advisement are offered. Contact for more information including eligibility.

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 filjaa@mail.law.cuny.edu.

CUNY 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. The open admissions policy ensures that any person who has a high school diploma or equivalency from a New York State school is eligible for admission into any of its community colleges. Specific eligibility requirements exist for admission into its senior colleges. 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.

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 www.opencampusmedia.org/category/newsletters/college-inside and www.hesc.ny.gov/partner-access/financial-aid-professionals/tap-and-scholarship-resources/tap-application-for-incarcerated-students.html.

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 programs to get up and running 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.

You aren't eligible for Pell Grants if you have a defaulted loan. If you currently have a loan in default the **US Department of Education** created the **Fresh Start** program that allows you to bring your loans into good standing. At the time of publication, this program is available until August 31st, 2024. If you currently have a loan in default, call **800.621.3115**, or write to **PO Box 5609, Greenville, TX 75403**. In your letter, include your name, social security number, date of birth, address of your facility and the following: "I am a confined or incarcerated individual. I would like to use Fresh Start to bring my loans back into good standing."

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.

For more information about Pell Grants call the **US Education Department's Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC)** at **800.433.3243**. If you have a question about defaulted loans, call **800.621.3115** or **877.825.9923**, or send mail to: **US Department of Education, Default Resolution Group, PO Box 5609, Greenville, TX 75403-5609**.

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**.

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.

**BENNINGTON COLLEGE—PRISON EDUCATION INITIATIVE
(PEI)** 

Facility: Great Meadow

One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201

Telephone: 802.442.5401

www.bennington.edu/prison-education-initiative

Offers a range of credit-bearing courses and a Bennington College associate's degree. Individuals who are interested must complete an application process including an essay, an interview, and a math evaluation to provide math course level placement if accepted. A college preparatory course may be required before joining a credit-bearing course. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent. In the event that a student transfers to another facility, PEI will communicate with the college program (if one exists) at that facility and will help transfer credits. Tutorial sessions are also provided. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and reviewed in May and December.

**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's 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, New York 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 six different correctional facilities by partnering with eight 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

Sullivan Correctional Facility

Degrees offered: Associate in Liberal Arts and Sciences, Bachelor's in Social Science

College partners: SUNY Sullivan, St. Thomas Aquinas College

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 PIPELINE (P2CP)



Facility: Otisville

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

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

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

Offers a liberal arts curriculum with a social science concentration. Individuals who are interested must complete an application process including placement exams in math, reading, and essay writing. Applicants must have either a high school diploma or equivalency and be in good disciplinary standing. Also operates the Learning Center with a networked computer lab, a library, and an area for students to meet with professors and tutors.

**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 Wallkill 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 prison 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

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 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.

Alumni who apply to SUNY Empire State College have their application fee waived and many Rising Hope courses are accepted for credit. The number of courses accepted depends on which degree program the student has chosen.

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

IMAGINE IF A DEVELOPER, EYEING OPEN LAND FOR A SHOPPING MALL, HAD TO ASK THE GOLDEN ROD, THE MEADOWLARKS, AND THE MONARCH BUTTERFLIES FOR PERMISSION TO TAKE THEIR HOMELAND. WHAT IF HE HAD TO ABIDE BY THE ANSWER? WHY NOT?

— ROBIN WALL KIMMERER



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY CHARLES SEIGNIOUS

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. No one in NYC can be turned away from a shelter if they are seeking one. It is important to stay up to date with any changes. More information on shelter placement for newly arrived people and families from other countries can be found on [page 240](#).

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 New York City 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 looking for housing immediately upon reentry are recommended to go directly to **30th Street Intake**, listed on [page 84](#).

HOUSING
82

For counseling services for individuals convicted of a sex offense, please see the listings for **Mustard Seed Counseling Services** ([page 145](#)), **New York Counseling for Change** ([page 145](#)), and **Shiloh Consulting** ([page 146](#)).

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 trained social services and professional staff, and assigned to a shelter with expertise 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 closely with clients in an individualized approach that aims to provide clients with the skills needed to achieve the highest level of self-sufficiency.

All adults entering the shelter system are expected to work with shelter staff to accomplish 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

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, Wed, and Fri 8:30am–10:30am. Also provides medical services, social work, buses to faith-based organizations, three meals a day, donations for clothing and toiletries, housing vouchers, and help for active clients seeking permanent housing. Food pantry on the second Wednesday of every month from 1–3:30pm. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

PROJECT HOSPITALITY

<https://projecthospitality.org>

100 Park Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10302

Telephone: 718.448.1544

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, and alcohol and substance use treatment services. 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: 212.947.3211

www.urbanpathways.org/programsandservices

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 for one overnight chair available from 4:30pm–5pm. 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 now 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, 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)— 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 or 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 caretaking (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 or telephone bills, pay stubs, or proof of income.

Do not bring

- Any contraband, alcohol, or illegal substances (smoking is not allowed in public buildings within NYC)
- 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 certain guidelines which include:

- Following the family's Independent Living Plan (ILP), which includes the steps that need to be followed 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.

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 ensure 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 cooperated with 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 cooperate 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

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 two 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 193](#) 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** for information about where and when they meet with clients throughout NYC. Manhattan and Brooklyn tenants can also call their intake line at **212.417.3888**, Tue 9am–1pm.

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 6:30am–7:30am and provides scholarships for career training programs through the Successful Steps Initiative.

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 279](#).

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 and a supported employment program.

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

Telephone: 646.672.2973www.doe.org

Provides paid transitional work, educational programming and occupational training, and employment and housing placement. All services are offered via a work-based wrap-around case management model. Also offers healthcare and sobriety support, in partnership with other providers.

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.

See the full listing for The Fortune Society on [page 39](#).

HOUR CHILDREN



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

See the full listing for Hour Children on [page 332](#).

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 people 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 **347.498.2583** 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 42](#).

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. 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 services to homeless people with disabilities, including substance use disorder, mental illness, or chronic illness. Areas of service include housing, outreach, healthcare, substance use disorder treatment, mental healthcare, and employment. Must be referred (referrals are usually through the shelter system, social service programs, and prisons); however, assistance will be provided in obtaining a referral if necessary.

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. 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 45](#).

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, shelter, medical care, residential recovery programs, transitional housing programs, vocational training, and employment services. Transitional housing

located at 90 Lafayette Street. Call for locations, hours, and intake 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. Call central intake for applications.

BRONXWORKS—HOMELESS OUTREACH TEAM

Operates a mobile outreach team and a 24-hour drop-in center in the Bronx with laundry and shower facilities, as well as three meals per day. Provides support services including housing placement, benefits assistance, and alcohol and substance use disorder treatment referrals.

See the full listing for BronxWorks on [page 351](#).

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 with the NYC municipal 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 324](#).

HOUSING WORKS—BAILEY HOUSE

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

Telephone: 347.473.7400

www.housingworks.org

A healing 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 healthcare. Contact for more information.

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 mailed out after 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. 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.

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 with currently incarcerated people who have a release date or with 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.

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.

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.

NYC Pending Law—Fair Chance for Housing Act

At the time of creating this publication, NYC Council voted to pass legislation that would protect people with a conviction history from housing discrimination, with limitations. If the bill becomes a law, landlords, owners, brokers, and other covered entities may not consider a person's conviction history until after determining a housing applicant's other qualifications after they have completed a waiting period. People with sex offense con-

victions are not protected by the law. If an applicant is rejected, the entity must provide a written explanation for why the rejection was due to a legitimate business interest. This bill would not apply where federal, state, or local laws require or permit exclusion based on conviction histories. For more information and updates visit <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5755059&GUID=1081D9A0-5626-4DE4-BB6A-142AB373A4AF&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=632>.

**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 to rights as a tenant including information about evictions. Can provide referrals to agencies, community organizing groups, and tenant lawyers.



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 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 [e.g., race, creed, national origin]), 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 220](#).

Eviction Information

It is important to stay up-to-date with policies and legal processes for tenants to know what protections you may have.

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.

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

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.

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

Telephone: 833.499.0343
www.nyshcr.org/rent

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 that have moved to 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.

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 resources to keep them stably housed. The portal features an eviction prevention tool to help renters navigate free public and private resources.

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 Online Form allows you to request a copy of your apartment's rent history from the Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR).

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.

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 ARE LEFT TO IMAGINE THE DAY
IT WON'T REQUIRE IMAGINATION
TO CARE ABOUT ALL OF THE OTHERS.

— KAMILAH AISHA MOON



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY TAVOS HOBIN PALMO

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 to help with their expenses.

US Federal government grants are not given to people for personal expenses. They are for organizations that work with programs and projects funded by the government, such as a nonprofit. 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.

For information on available grants available in NYS visit <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov>.

For information on help with starting a business go to [page 366](#). For information on continuing education grants and loans go to [page 67](#).

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 New York State, lost or unclaimed money gets turned over by organizations required to report dormant accounts to the New York State 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 provides 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 10am–3pm)

<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 190](#).

URBAN JUSTICE CENTER—SAFETY NET PROJECT

Telephone: 646.923.8358

Provides New Yorkers help with access to public assistance and other forms of aid. Call Mon–Fri, 10am–5pm. For benefits intake specifically, call Thu 1–5pm.

See the full listing for Urban Justice Center on [page 196](#).

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 Program (TANF). Single individuals without children and families who have already received cash assistance for 60 months may receive benefits under the NYS Safety Net Program.

Eligibility criteria must be met and include income and resources, immigration status, and residency requirements. 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 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 ^(ES)

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 under 18.

NYC FOOD POLICY—COMMUNITY FOOD CONNECTIONS ^(ES)

Emergency Foodline: 866.888.8777

www.nyc.gov/site/foodpolicy/programs/emergency-food.page

Call or visit the website for a referral to food pantries located throughout NYC 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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 ^(ES)

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–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. A refrigerator on the premises provides boxed meals or sandwiches Thu, Fri, and Sat 5am–5pm, and Tue, Wed, and Sun 12pm–5pm. The Clothing Closet is available for distribution of casual clothing free of charge Tue and Wed 10am–12pm. Interview clothing is by appointment only with a referral letter. Assistance with applying for benefits (Access HRA) is available most Thursdays or by appointment.

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/gcfp for a list of stops.

See the full listing for Coalition for the Homeless on [page 96](#).

GROWN NYC 

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. Also offers compost drop-off and textile recycling. 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 groceries at the pantry is available Tue–Thu 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 for details.

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 130](#).

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 older people pay for prescription drugs. Call or go online for information on eligibility in multiple languages. The helpline is available Mon–Fri 8am–5pm.

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.

Financial Counseling

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/help/getting-oriented/financial-literacy/web-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 any personal money matters one might have. Budget and Credit Coaching offers individuals ongoing assistance with debt problems. Financial Counseling offers individuals help with finances. 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.

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.

TAXPAYER ADVOCATE SERVICES (TAS)

Because of the complicated nature of each individual's tax situation, it is best to reach out to the IRS or Taxpayer Advocate Services for EIP and tax assistance. For more information visit www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov.

People who have not opened a case with TAS, should call **877.777.4778** to get started. Those who do 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.

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.

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, and 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.

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 (NYCLA)— 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 194](#).

URBAN UPBOUND

Administration Office

12-11 40th Avenue, Long Island City, NY 11101

Telephone: 718.784.0877

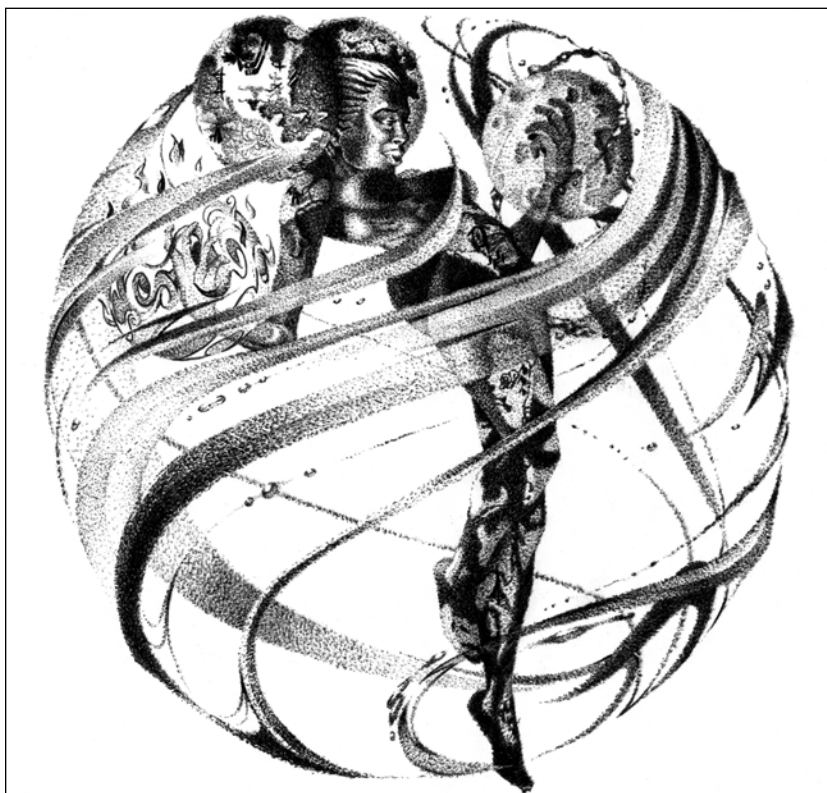
<https://urbanupbound.org>

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

I AM A SPY IN THE HOUSE OF ME. I REPORT BACK FROM
THE FRONT LINES OF THE BATTLE THAT IS ME. I AM
SOMEWHAT NONPLUSSED BY THE EVENT THAT IS MY LIFE.

— CARRIE FISHER



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY JUSTIN WALKER

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; 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; get directions, MetroCards, Narcan and fentanyl test strips, toiletry kits, home COVID-19 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 may begin in partnership with the CHS Social Work Department while incarcerated and be 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 8am–5pm.

Point of Reentry and Transition (PORT) Practices

The PORT Practices are primary care clinics available to all individuals released from the New York City jail system. The clinics are staffed by Community Health Workers (CHWs) with lived experience and physicians who are sensitive to the challenges faced by those with histories of criminal legal system involvement. Also connects patients to other treatment providers and community-based social supports. Call the PORTline to get connected to the practices.

Bellevue Hospital PORT Practice

462 1st Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Kings County Hospital PORT Practice

451 Clarkson Avenue, E Building, Brooklyn, NY 11203

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—COMMUNITY HEALTH

10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Telephone: 718.230.2768

www.bklynlibrary.org/outreach/community-health

Connects people with health, wellness, and social support 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 referrals for mental health/counseling, food assistance, employment assistance, housing assistance, and health insurance coverage. For more information call or email healthybklyn@bklynlibrary.org.

Free & Low-Cost Medical Care

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

Hotline: 347.396.7959

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 (abortion pills) for people in their first trimester of pregnancy is available at the Jamaica and Morrisania Sexual Health Clinics. Call for medical evaluation, counseling, and clinic appointments. Walk-ins are also accepted. The last walk-in for medication abortion services is 2pm. Call or visit the website for a list of clinic locations across NYC. The hotline is available Mon–Fri 9–3:30.

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.

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 12116

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 10016

Telephone: 866.246.8259

www.chnny.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 safe, sensitive, and respectful healthcare for anyone who has experienced sexual violence or human rights abuses regardless of age, gender, insurance, or documentation status. Services include routine physicals, OB/GYN and pregnancy care, STI tests, pregnancy tests, birth control, diabetes care, gender-affirming care, HIV care, and PrEP. Also provides care navigation and survivor-led services. Can make referrals for mental healthcare, dentistry, and acupuncture.

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

440 West 114th Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10025

Telephone: 212.523.6500

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

Offers comprehensive medical and support services for formerly incarcerated individuals ages 18 and over. Supportive counseling is offered individually and in groups, and case management is provided by formerly incarcerated staff. Provides primary health/medical care, OB/GYN, mental health treatment, dental care, case management and social services, legal services, support groups, substance use counseling, and more. On-site pharmacy services are available. It is helpful to bring a photo ID, insurance card, and any medical records to the initial visit.

THE NEW YORK CITY FREE CLINIC (NYCFC) 

230 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.206.5200

<https://nycfreeclinic.com>

Provides a full range of healthcare services including specialty referrals, counseling, patient education, social services, and screening and registration for public health insurance. New patients will be screened for free health insurance eligibility by a social worker. Documents (such as ID, proof of income, and ben-

efits information) will help determine insurance eligibility. Visit the website for updated information on hours and appointments.

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

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

The mobile units offer primary care, wound care, mental health support, harm reduction services, and basic material necessities to homeless people in over 15 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

NYC 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.

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

150 Broadway, Suite 355, Albany, New York 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, Atlanta, GA 30329

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 or requested by mail.

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.

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 114](#) 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. The policy is not retroactive. As written, it only applies to people released from prison after January 1, 2023. For more information visit www.cms.gov/training-education/partner-outreach-resources/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 insur-

ance 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

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 118](#).

HIV & AIDS

NYS HIV/AIDS INFORMATION AND COUNSELING HOTLINE

Hotline: 800.541.2437

www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids

Provides taped information on prevention, diagnosis, and treatment 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 benefits, legal help, and other needs is provided. Call to schedule an appointment.

See the full listing for Argus on [page 159](#).

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

Telephone: 347.505.5000

www.bac-ny.org

260 Broadway, 4th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11211

Telephone: 347.505.5120

2201-B Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226

Telephone: 347.505.5146

2261 Church Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226

Telephone: 347.505.5176

A multi-service, community-based behavioral health care organization. Provides screening, diagnostic, treatment, and outpatient counseling services for mental health or substance use. Also provides supportive housing with case management to people living with HIV or those who have mental illness or are former substance users. Offers primary healthcare, STI, HIV, and hepatitis C screening, prevention education, healthcare coordination, and other social support services to underserved people of color in Brooklyn and other parts of NYC.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ACTION OF STATEN ISLAND

56 Bay Street, Staten Island, NY 10301

Telephone: 718.808.1300

<https://chasiny.org>

Offers case management to people living with HIV, education services to people who are currently incarcerated, and reentry support for people on parole, as well as support groups, domestic violence and trauma services tailored for families, LGBTQ survivors, and people involved in the criminal legal system, job-search assistance,

housing assistance, counseling, a food bank, 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 39](#).

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 signup, document translation services (at a cost), HIV/AIDS testing and prevention education (including PrEP), 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>

HAF-Queens Pride House

76-11 37th Avenue, Suite 206, Jackson Heights, NY 10372

Telephone: 718.429.5309

Provides information, counseling, and support groups for anyone with questions about HIV or AIDS. Offers rental assistance resources, case management, and LGBT-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

Telephone: 917.751.6878

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. Call to schedule an appointment

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 195](#).

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 220](#).

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 / TTY: 888.232.6348
www.cdc.gov/hepatitis

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

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://nycwell.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.

CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (CASES)—NATHANIEL CLINIC



2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10027
Telephone: 212.553.6708

Provides mental health services for people 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 34](#).

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.

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 experi-

ence 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, 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 youth and 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

384 East 149th Street, Room 622, Bronx, NY 10455

Telephone: 718.401.2555

<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, and job training. 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, 40 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

6001 Executive Blvd., Room 6200, 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

150-10 Hillside Avenue, Jamaica, NY, 11432
Telephone: 718.658.7201

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.

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 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.

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, 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 

PO Box 711113, Los Angeles, CA 90071
Telephone: 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 299](#).

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, shelter placement, 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) (ES)

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)

Telephone: 800.826.3632

www.dbsalliance.org

Provides information on bipolar disorder and depression, and referrals to 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) ^{ES}

<https://nycwell.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 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

WE ARE NOT TRAPPED OR LOCKED UP IN THESE BONES.
NO, NO. WE ARE FREE TO CHANGE. AND LOVE CHANGES US.
AND IF WE CAN LOVE ONE ANOTHER, WE CAN BREAK OPEN
THE SKY.

— WALTER MOSLEY



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ARTWORK BY GREISH ORTEGA-LEBRÓN

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)

<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
Telephone: 718.398.0800 / Intake: 347.971.5862
<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



A substance use disorder treatment program offered as an alternative to incarceration for adults offering counseling, individualized treatment plans, and referrals to community-based services.

See the full listing for CCA on [page 35](#).

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 38](#).

EXPONENTS   

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.

See the full listing for Exponents on [page 38](#).

OSBORNE ASSOCIATION—EL RIO   

Offers outpatient substance use disorder treatment as an alternative to incarceration or for people on probation or parole at the Bronx location. El Rio offers individual and group counseling from a trauma-informed, person-centered approach.

See the full listing for Osborne Association on [page 42](#).

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: 718.401.5720
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 or drugs, referrals from the Department of Homeless Services (DHS), and willing to take a tuberculosis test. First time attendants automatically get a bed for seven days.

See the full listing for The Bowery Mission on [page 95](#).

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.

LOWER EASTSIDE SERVICE CENTER

80 Maiden Lane, Suite 305, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.566.7931

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

<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.

SAMARITAN DAYTOP VILLAGE

Administrative Headquarters

138-02 Queens Blvd., Briarwood, NY 11435

Telephone: 718.206.2000 / Intake: 718.657.6195

www.samaritanvillage.org

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. Telehealth services are available.

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

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://nycwell.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.

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://nycwell.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. 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 tran-

quilizer 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.

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>.

Drug testing kits

Testing drugs with a test kit on unregulated drugs 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>.

DoseTest sells fentanyl test strips starting at \$0.95 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://dosetest.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

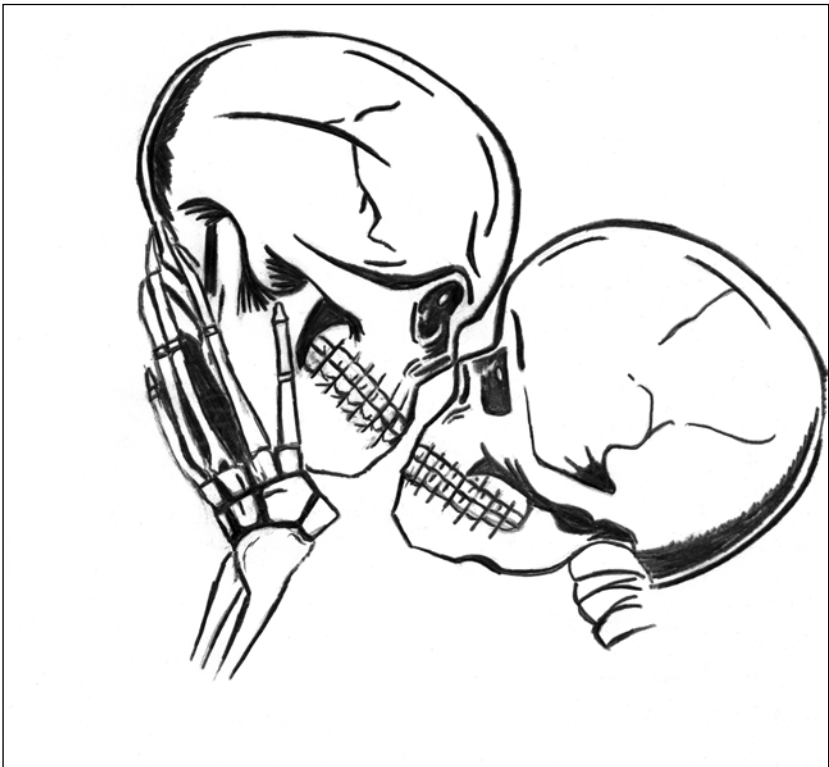
Drop-in hours: Mon–Fri 7:30am–11pm, Sat and Sun 9am–4:30pm

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. People can call **718.415.3708** to report syringe litter and public drug use, and a team will be dispatched to clean up the area and help divert public use. Location accessible to people with disabilities. Contact for the most up-to-date drop-in hours.

Legal

TO MAKE A THIEF, MAKE AN OWNER; TO CREATE CRIME,
CREATE LAWS.

— URSULA K. LE GUIN



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY ZULEINY GALARZA

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 348](#).

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 151](#). 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 184](#).

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

Since 2020, in-person visits at NYC DOC facilities have changed many times. Visit www.nyc.gov/site/doc/inmate-info/Revised_Visit_Schedule.page for the most up-to-date information.

Televisits, which can be done using any electronic device with a camera, an internet connection, and an active email account, are still being offered. 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.

184 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.

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, including in 2023.

For more information on the amended law and the impact on discovery law reform visit <https://nyuj.org/resources/fy-2023-new-york-state-budgets-impact-on-bail-discovery-and-other-criminal-justice-reforms> and 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 Mothers, Healthy Babies Program and The Robert P. Paterson Youth Mentoring 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)   

177 Livingston Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Telephone: 718.254.0700
Family Defense Practice: 347.592.2500
<https://bds.org>

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.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY

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 118](#).

THE EXONERATION INITIATIVE (EXI)  

233 Broadway, Suite 2370, New York, NY 10279
Telephone: 212.965.9335
www.exonerationinitiative.org

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 Pierrepont 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

190

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)

<http://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.

The following are numbers by borough:

Bronx Criminal Defense: 718.579.3000

Bronx Civil: 718.991.4758

Brooklyn Criminal Defense: 718.237.2000

Brooklyn Civil: 718.722.3100

Manhattan Criminal Defense: 212.732.5000

Manhattan Civil: 212.426.3000

Queens Criminal Defense: 718.286.2000

Queens Civil: 718.286.2450

Staten Island Criminal Defense: 347.422.5333

Staten Island Civil: 347.422.5333

LEGAL HAND 

www.legalhand.org

3213 3rd Avenue, Bronx, NY 10451

Telephone: 929.222.2014

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. Check 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

www.legalservicesnyc.org

Provides free civil legal services to those who are income-eligible in offices located throughout NYC. Attorneys represent clients in matters relating to housing, welfare, public benefits, and more. Also advises and represents NYC residents facing discrimination and barriers to employment based on conviction history. Call Mon-Fri 9:30-4. Help is available in any language.

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 LGBTQI+ community including a helpline, virtual and in-person legal clinics, and an attorney referral service. Staffed by volunteer attorneys who are available to provide general guidance and legal referrals, but not legal representation. In-person legal clinics are held at locations across NYC. Visit the website for more information and locations.

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.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEFENDER SERVICE OF HARLEM



317 Lenox Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.876.5500

www.ndsny.org

Provides legal representation to residents of upper Manhattan. Practice areas include pre-arrest services, criminal defense, family defense, civil defense, housing defense, immigration defense, and youth law.

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 at no charge. 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



111 Broadway, New York, NY 10006

Telephone: 212.267.6646 x217

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

100 Pearl Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 212.613.5000

<https://nylag.org>

Provides free civil legal services to low-income individuals and families who would otherwise be unable to access legal assistance. Practice areas include healthcare, public benefits, tenants' rights, foreclosure prevention, consumer protection, special education, financial counseling, immigration, family law, LGBTQ law, and employment law.

PAROLE PREPARATION PROJECT



135 West 20th Street, Suite 401, c/o Law Office of Michelle L. Lewin, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 347.620.5906

www.paroleprepn.org

An advocacy organization that works with incarcerated individuals serving parole-eligible life sentences in NYS prisons. Volunteers are trained to collaborate with individuals as they prepare to appear before the parole board. People with indeterminate life sentences who are 8–12 months away from their next parole hearing are prioritized; cannot offer direct assistance to those further away from their hearings. Upon release, individuals can join Survivors of the System (SOS). SOS serves as a support network, an advocacy and activist group, and a proponent for the abolition of prisons. Those interested can write a letter directly, or email email info@paroleprepn.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, Coxsackie, Eastern, Edgecombe, Franklin, Gouverneur, Great Meadow, Greene, Hale Creek, Hudson, Marcy, Mid-State, Mohawk, Otisville, Queensboro, Riverview, Shawangunk, Sullivan, 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.

CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS (CRR)—THE JAILHOUSE LAWYER'S HANDBOOK

<https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/issues/mass-incarceration>

Provides *the Jailhouse Lawyer's Handbook*, a free resource for people in prison who wish to file a federal lawsuit addressing poor conditions in prison or abuse by prison staff to incarcerated people and their families. Visit the website to place an order for a currently incarcerated friend or loved one.

COLUMBIA HUMAN RIGHTS LAW REVIEW—A JAILHOUSE LAWYER'S MANUAL (JLM)

435 West 116th Street, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.854.1601

<http://jlm.law.columbia.edu>

A handbook of legal rights and procedures designed for currently incarcerated people, available for free online. In addition to the *JLM*, the *Texas and Louisiana State Supplement* and an *Immigration & the Consular Access Supplement* are available. Orders can be placed by incarcerated people by using a mail order form, available at the address above. Visit the website for information on pricing, to print the order form, or to order directly from the website when available.

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.

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.

For more information on the amended law and the impact on bail reform visit <https://nyuj.org/resources/fy-2023-new-york-state-budgets-impact-on-bail-discovery-and-other-criminal-justice-reforms> and www.innovatingjustice.org/publications/bail-revisited-NYS.

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.

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, their addresses and phone numbers, information to locate someone

who is currently incarcerated, 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.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION (DOC)

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.

You can register through the Department of Motor Vehicles website at <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application> or by providing a paper form in person or by mail to your county board of elections.

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 disabilities. 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 **Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law** at www.bazelon.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.

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.

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.

Those born outside NYC must contact the department of health or vital records in their home state. Links to information for each state are 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 §168-0 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 377](#) 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 resolu-

tion 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 197](#).

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.

LEGAL

218

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—CONSUMER ISSUES

Telephone: 844.872.4681

www.usa.gov/consumer

Provides a wide range of information to consumers including on safe banking; automobile purchase and care; how to file complaints effectively for common consumer problems; finding and keeping a home; common types of insurance and how to choose the one that's best; recalled medications, food, vehicles, and child safety seats; saving and investing; 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; 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

www.pubadvocate.nyc.gov

The website provides information about housing, education, government transparency, business assistance, consumer advice, and more.

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 suf-

ficient 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.

LEGAL

For more information about the new law and the Less Is More NY campaign, visit <https://lessismoreny.org>.

224 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

In 2021, New York passed the The Humane Alternatives to Long-Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act which took effect March, 2022.

The following information is from www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/

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 195](#)).
- **Correctional Association of NY (CANY) at 212.254.5700**

NYC Pending Law—Banning solitary confinement in city jails

At the time of creating this publication, NYC Council voted to pass legislation that would ban solitary confinement in NYC jails. If the bill becomes a law, it would ban the use of solitary confinement in city jails and provide individuals in custody of the Department of Correction (DOC) due process protections prior to being placed in restrictive housing or continued use of restraints. The bill would also set limits on how DOC can use emergency lock-ins and require regular reporting on DOC's use of de-escalation confinement, restrictive housing, and emergency lock-ins. For updates and more information visit <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5698267&GUID=6F47F49A-06A3-444C-BBB7-3CBFF899DD84&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=solitary>.

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 145](#).

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.

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

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 (choose option 3 for 24/7 service)
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 Detention Reporting and Information Line

Telephone: 888.351.4024

DHS Office of Inspector General/MAIL STOP 0305

245 Murray Lane SW, Washington, DC 20528

Telephone: 800.323.8603

www.oig.dhs.gov/about/contact

ICE Office of Professional Responsibility, Joint Intake Center PO Box 14475, Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20044

Telephone: 877.246.8253

www.ice.gov/about-ice/opr

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 at 209.757.3733 (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

GEOGRAPHY IS THE STUDY OF EARTH AS THE HOME OF PEOPLE.

— YI-FU TUAN



ARTWORK BY V. PEPE

USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

Immigration Law & Enforcement

Immigration laws and policies change frequently. It is important to stay up to date with these changes and to understand your rights. 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 180](#).

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 fire-arms or weapons.
- **Note:** These priorities have changed twice under the current administration and may change again. 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 213](#).)

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 written complaint about ICE employee misconduct with the **ICE Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR)** at www.ice.gov/about-ice/opr, **877.246.8253**, or **ICE Office of Professional Responsibility, PO Box 14475, Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20044**.

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.
- 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 on the **Arrival Center** and **Asylum Seeker Resource Navigation Centers**, at www.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/help/asylum-seekers/asylum-seeker-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 that time frame, they need to return to the Arrival Center for another placement.

At the time of creating this publication the legal right to shelter in NYC stands, meaning no one in NYC can legally be turned away from a shelter, **but the City is not in compliance with the law.** It is important to know that for those who are seeking renewal of shelter placement, the process can take more than a week.

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 their **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 clear 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, **ActionNYC** at **800.354.0365** (Mon–Fri 9–6).

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—IMMIGRANT SERVICES

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. Through a partnership with ActionNYC, free immigration legal help is provided including comprehensive immigration legal screenings and representation for cases including citizenship, green card applications and renewals, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and more; information on immigration policy and answers to immigration-related questions; and referrals to other community-based resources and support services. 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

Telephone: 718.230.2007

www.bklynlibrary.org/learn/immigrants

Offers free in-person and virtual citizenship classes; call or email immigrantservices@bklynlibrary.org for more information. 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 170 languages in all 60 BPL locations and telephone reference lines. Free immigration legal assistance is provided by the Immigrant Justice Corps (IJC). 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



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 and 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 immigration legal services through an ActionNYC partnership, along with referrals for more complicated immigration cases. For more information visit the website or email napref@queenslibrary.org.

US CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES—GREEN CARDS



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)



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— ACTIONNYC

Hotline: 800.354.0365 or 311 and say “ActionNYC” (Mon–Fri 9–6)
www.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/help/legal-services/actionnyc.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 help with filing and processing immigrant visa applications; assistance with renewing employment authorization cards, green cards, and temporary protected status; assistance with filing naturalization and citizenship applications legal representation before US Citizenship and Immigration Services and the immigration court; ESOL classes; civics classes; and counseling on resources for housing, financial, and health needs.

See the full listing for BronxWorks on [page 351](#).

BROOKLYN DEFENDER SERVICES (BDS)—IMMIGRATION PRACTICE



Telephone: 718.564.6290

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 **347.768.3040**.

See the full listing for BDS on [page 187](#).

CABRINI IMMIGRANT SERVICES OF NYC



701 Fort Washington Avenue, Manhattan, NY 10040 (near 190th Street)

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: 718.287.0010

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 118](#).

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

150 Elizabeth Street, New York, NY 10012

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

www1.cuny.edu/sites/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 65](#).

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

Telephone: 718.243.1222

<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 interviews, and regular evaluations to track progress and prepare for a long-term career. Visit the website for more information 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, #702, 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



1322 Webster Street, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612

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 offered to people in US immigration detention, available Mon–Fri 9am–11pm EST (6am–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



Telephone: 212.714.290

From Detention: 917.654.9696 (Mon–Wed 9:30–5:30, Thu 1–5:30)

<https://immigratonequality.org>

Provides free legal services to LGBTQI+ people and those living with HIV who are asylum seekers physically present in the United States 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



Immigration Helpline: 844.955.3425

Offers free legal counsel and advice to non-citizen New Yorkers who are detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) who cannot afford a private lawyer. Fact sheets and other resources are available online. Those in need of assistance can call the helpline Mon–Fri 9–5. Collect calls from detention facilities and prisons are accepted.

See the full listing for Legal Aid Society on [page 190](#).

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.

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.

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.

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY—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 (NWNKY)

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 363](#).

QUEER DETAINEE EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (QDEP)



308 West 46th Street, New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 347.645.9339

www.qdep.org

Works with LGBTQIA TS + GNC immigrants who are currently in detention centers, those that have been recently released from detention centers, and those at risk of entering immigration detention in the tri-state area (Connecticut, New Jersey, New York). Assists people coming out of immigration detention in securing structural, health/wellness, educational, legal, and emotional support and services.

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.

Veterans

IT IS ONLY WITH THE HEART THAT ONE CAN SEE RIGHTLY;
WHAT IS ESSENTIAL IS INVISIBLE TO THE EYE.

— ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY PATRICK HUGHES

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)



ES

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, Suite 2208, 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.

BLACK VETERANS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, INC.

665 Willoughby Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11206

Telephone: 718.852.6004

www.bvsj.org

Assists veterans and their families in areas such as 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: 646.664.8835

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 65](#).

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS OF AMERICA (IAVA)



85 Broad Street, 18th Floor, New York, NY 10004
Telephone: 212.982.9699 / Quick Reaction Force: 855.917.2743
<https://iava.org>

An advocacy and support organization for post-9/11 generation veterans, and advocates on behalf of all veterans. The Quick Reaction Force (QRF) is a one-stop-shop providing peer to peer support, resource connections, and comprehensive care management. Veterans and veteran family members can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to speak with a Veteran Care Manager. An online form is also available.

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

950 North Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

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

Telephone: 646.790.2449

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 143](#).

VETERANS CRISIS LINE

Hotline: 988 (press 1)

www.veteranscrisisline.net

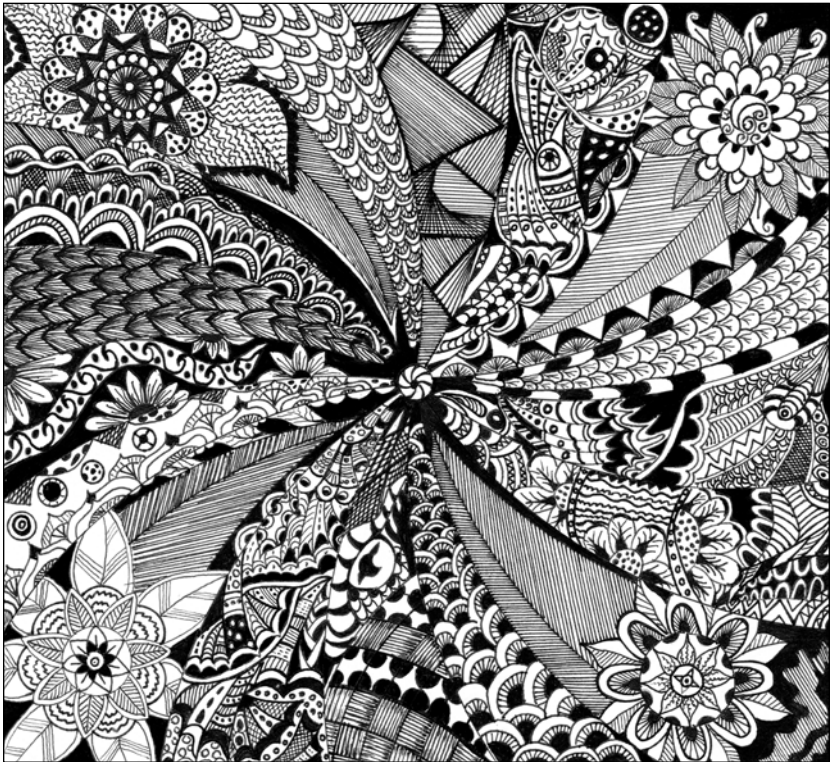
Connects veterans in crisis, and their families and friends, with qualified VA responders through a toll-free hotline. Online chat and texting are also available. Support is offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

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

THE STOLEN BODY, THE RECLAIMED BODY, THE BODY
THAT KNOWS ITSELF AND THE WORLD, THE STONE AND
THE HEAT WHICH WARMS IT: MY BODY HAS NEVER BEEN
SINGULAR.

— ELI CLARE



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY MIGUEL NAPOLES

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 216](#) 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 center in charge of NYS. Provides information, training, and guidance on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

DISABILITY RIGHTS NEW YORK

New York City Office: 25 Chapel Street, Suite 1005, Brooklyn, New York 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 dis-

abilities. 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 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, can be mailed to a person's home free of charge. Audio books are available in multiple languages, including English, Russian, and Yiddish. Large print books are also available. For more information email library@jbilibrary.org or call and ask for the Library.

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, can be mailed to your home free of charge. Also provides access to a free audiobook app, on-site assistive technology, 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 physically 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. Other languages are also spoken.

NYC TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION—ACCESSIBILITY DISPATCH PROGRAM



Telephone: 311 / Dispatch: 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 counseling, 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.

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

Hotline: 855.812.1001
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

Headquarters: 633 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10017
Telephone: 212.727.4200
www.fedcap.org

Vocational Rehabilitation

210 East 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017

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. Contact for chapter meeting information. All meetings 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.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS (ILCS)

Nonprofit community-based and independent organizations run by and for individuals with disabilities in New York City. 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

4419 3rd Avenue, #2C, Bronx, NY 10457

Telephone: 718.515.2800 / TTY: 718.515.2803

Videophone: 866.426.8059

<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, Suite 21, Lower Level, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.222.7122 / Videophone: 646.755.3092

Relay: 866.326.5876

<https://hilcnyc.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

Provides subsidized, short-term employment for developmentally disabled people of working age with a goal toward permanent employment. Referrals from ACCES-VR and other agencies accepted. Offers Community Connections and Supported Living, providing individuals with assistance and safeguards as needed.

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. 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 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 194](#).

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

LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN FOR THE UNKNOWN, THE DOOR INTO THE DARK. THAT'S WHERE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS COME FROM, WHERE YOU YOURSELF CAME FROM, AND WHERE YOU WILL GO.

— REBECCA SOLNIT



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ARTWORK BY A. HYMAN

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 216](#).

If you are not being provided the medical care you need, contact your lawyer or the ACLU.

A BEAUTIFUL HEART MINISTRIES   

175 Pearl Street, Floors 1–3, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 516.601.3390

www.abeautifulheartministries.org

Offers a range of support and services to formerly incarcerated women and girls, 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 individual and group substance use counseling, domestic violence education and support, legal advocacy services, vocational and educational services, prevention services, and assistance with connection to supportive housing.

HOOR CHILDREN

Provides comprehensive services to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their families.

See the full listing for Hour Children on [page 332](#).

THE LADIES OF HOPE MINISTRIES (THE LOHM)

8 West 126th Street, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 646.820.0011

<https://thelohm.org>

The Pathways 4 Equity (P4E) Program is a 12-month career fellowship designed for women directly affected by the criminal legal system consisting of three months of personal and professional development training, as well as a 9-month paid position with an employer partner. The EPIC Repro+Justice program aims to empower women and nonbinary individuals who have been impacted by the criminal legal system with the education and resources needed to have bodily autonomy and agency. Faces of Women Imprisoned is a Speakers Bureau created and run by formerly incarcerated women with the goal of deepening and broadening the public conversation, empowering formerly incarcerated women, and providing income for women as they speak around the country. The EPIC Ambassadors Fellowship provides training, strategic guidance, and support for women who have been impacted by incarceration to advocate and create legislative policies focused on ending poverty.

WOMEN
280

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 94](#).

REENTRY ROCKS

Telephone: 718.269.4152

www.reentryrocks.org

Provides comprehensive, trauma-informed, support to formerly incarcerated survivors of intimate partner violence and sexual assault. Individual and group counseling services include domestic violence support groups, understanding your anger, and parenting skills. Also provides services to assist with the trauma experienced as a result of incarceration, reentry, substance use, and COVID-19. Sentenced to Dance is a six week creative arts program where participants engage in movement as a form of self-expression, empowerment, and healing. The Fellowship Program is divided into three different phases where various levels of intensive training take place to support formerly incarcerated women in starting a for-profit business or a 501c3. Call or visit the website for more information and enrollment.

RISING GROUND—STEPS TO END FAMILY VIOLENCE

Main Office: 151 Lawrence Street, 5th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Telephone: 212.437.3500 / Helpline: 877.783.7794

www.risingground.org

Offers individual and group support as well as 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. Contact for updates on services and other locations.

VOLUNTEERS OF LEGAL SERVICE (VOLS)—INCARCERATED MOTHERS LAW PROJECT

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

Telephone: 212.966.4400

<https://volspobono.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.

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 45](#).

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. Other languages are also 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, 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 335](#).

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 95](#).

BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER DETECTION

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Telephone: 212.639.2000 / Central Scheduling: 833.319.1577
www.mskcc.org

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. Visit www.health.ny.gov/diseases/cancer/services for eligibility.

Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center

300 East 66th Street, Floors 1–4, New York, NY 10065

Telephone: 833.673.1412

Services include medical oncology, surgery consultations, chemotherapy, pathology, diagnostic imaging including mammograms, gynecologic medical services, and screening programs. Interpreter service available.

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 147](#).

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

Offers programs and services for women and gender-expansive people, immigrant women, and women of color who are interested in a career in the food industry, facility management, and more.

See the full listing for Hot Bread Kitchen on [page 362](#).

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 363](#).

PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF GREATER NEW YORK

Telephone: 800.230.7526

www.ppgreaterny.org

Offers a wide range of services including low- or no-cost gynecological care; birth control; cancer screenings; pregnancy testing; STI testing and treatment; HIV prevention, testing, and counseling; gender-affirming hormone therapy; and vasectomy. Provides

abortion services. Services available to everyone, regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, immigration status, or ability to pay. Call or visit the website to make an appointment and for information on virtual services.

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: 855.243.1042

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. Other languages are also 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 or South Asian identifying 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 339](#).

Helplines

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY—NEW YORK

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 / TTY: 800.787.3224

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 Witness Aid Services for counseling and other social services. Provides information and referrals.

STRONGHEARTS NATIVE HELPLINE

Helpline: 844.762.8483

<https://strongheartshelpline.org>

A safe, anonymous, and confidential domestic violence and dating 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

THE SECRET OF STAYING YOUNG IS TO LIVE HONESTLY, EAT SLOWLY, AND LIE ABOUT YOUR AGE.

— LUCILLE BALL



ARTWORK BY CARLOS HENDRICKS

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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 42](#).

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 220](#).

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 much more in each borough. 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, 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 335](#).

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 246](#).

DOROT

171 West 85th Street, New York, NY 10024
Telephone: 212.769.2850
www.dorotusa.org

Provides cultural and educational enrichment services for older adults. Visit the website for a list of ongoing programs. Some programs are associated with small membership fees.

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. Participants receive stipends.

SENIOR PLANET

127 West 25th Street, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 646.590.0615 / Hotline: 888.713.3495 (Mon–Fri 9–8)

<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.

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 LGBT ELDERNS (SAGE)



Provides crisis intervention, support groups to LGBTQI+ elders, and individual, homebound, family, and group counseling to people ages 65 and over and their caregivers.

See the full listing for SAGE on [page 305](#).

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. The policy is not retroactive. As written, it only applies to people released from prison after January 1, 2023. For more information visit www.cms.gov/training-education/partner-outreach-resources/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

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)

Telephone: 800.332.3742 / TTY: 800.290.9138

www.health.ny.gov/health_care/epic

Helps seniors pay for prescription drugs. Call or visit the website for information on eligibility.

Housing

For more organizations see the *Housing* chapter, starting from [page 91](#). 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

Telephone: 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 with currently incarcerated people who have a release date or with 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

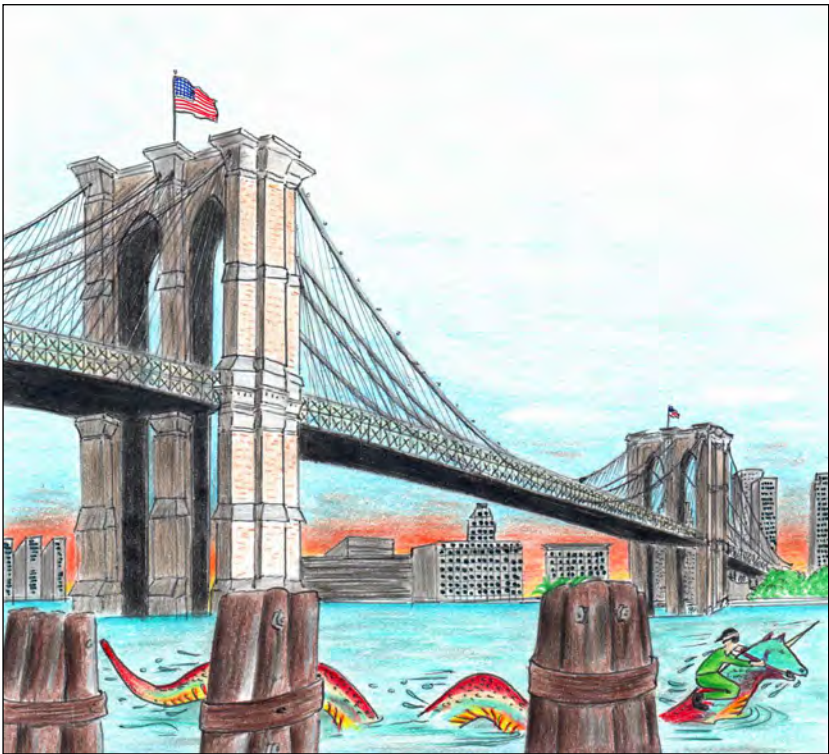
Telephone: 718.931.9700

<https://centershealthcare.com>

Composed of over 40 nursing homes and two assisted living facilities across New York State, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. Offers discharge planning for the chronically ill.

LGBTQI+

STILL, SOMEHOW, WE ARE
LAUGHTER. WE ARE THE DOORWAY OUT.
WE ARE (AGAIN) THE DOORWAY IN.
— SAMIYA BASHIR



ARTWORK BY ROBERT T. BRUNO

USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

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 on 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 189](#)) 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're Discriminated Against

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 173](#).

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 and has LGBTQI+ knowledgeable providers offering services in primary care, sexual health care, gender-affirming care, HIV testing, treatment, and other services. Information can be searched for at <https://a816-healthpsi.nyc.gov/NYHealthMap> or by calling **311**.

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 220](#).

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. Contact for a printed copy.

ALI FORNEY CENTER (AFC)

Provides emergency housing and services to LGBTQI+ youth experiencing homelessness.

See the full listing for Ali Forney Center on [page 323](#).

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. Provides accompaniment to police, court, medical, or social service agencies. Legal services and individual and group counseling are available. Walk-in hours are Mon–Fri 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 in NY/NJ/CT or on parole in NYC boroughs. 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; sending 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

230 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.271.7200

356 West 18th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.271.7200

Provides healthcare and related services targeted to 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 24/7, confidential crisis counseling to everyone, regardless of their status as a client.

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

30 3rd Avenue, Brooklyn, NY, 11217

www.caeny.org

Mailing Address

PO Box 260488, 2273 Church Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226

Offers Self-Defense and Upstander workshops for women, LGBTQIA + GNC people, and anyone at risk from racism and xenophobia. 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 parentage and coparenting, or protections for individuals and families, such as wills and estate documents. 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 LGBTQI+ 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.

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 325](#).

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. Virtual sessions are available by

appointment on Thu and Sun evenings. Visit the website for more information and to schedule an 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 189](#).

**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 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.

LGBT BAR ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK

Provides several legal services to the LGBTQI+ community, including a helpline, virtual and in-person legal clinics, and an attorney referral service.

See the full listing for LeGaL on [page 192](#).


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 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, and their families, through litigation, legislation, policy, and public education. Works at the local, state, and federal levels to ensure that LGBTQI+ incarcerated people are as safely housed as possible and have access to medical care. Visit the website for rights and legal resources.

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.

LGBTQI+

304

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 42](#).

QUEER DETAINEE EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (QDEP)



Works with LGBTQIA TS + GNC immigrants who are currently in detention centers, those that have been recently released from detention centers, and those at risk of entering immigration detention in the tri-state area (Connecticut, New Jersey, New York).

See the full listing for QDEP on [page 253](#).

SERVICES AND ADVOCACY FOR LGBT ELDERS (SAGE)



305 7th Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 212.741.2247 / Hotline: 877.360.5428

www.sageusa.org

Provides crisis intervention, support groups to LGBTQI+ elders, and individual, homebound, family, and group counseling to people ages 65 and over and their caregivers. The hotline provides support and information about community support resources such as healthcare, transportation, counseling, legal services, and emotional support programs, and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 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/or intersex people (TGNCI) who are people of color and/or low-income. 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 manners 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.

LGBTQI+
306

TRANS LIFELINE  

195 41st Street, #11253, Oakland, CA 94611
Telephone: 510.771.1417 / Hotline: 877.565.8860
<https://translifeline.org>

A national, trans-led nonprofit hotline and microgrants organization offering direct emotional and financial support to transgender people. Operators will only call emergency services with your

express consent. Volunteers are all trans-identified and educated in the range of difficulties transgender people experience.

The Name Change Microgrants program can help people with changing their legal name and updating government identification documents. Visit the website for an application.

The Commissary Microgrants program provides commissary money (\$500 Microgrant per person, per year, as funding allows) for people who identify as trans and/or nonbinary who are currently incarcerated in the US (city or county jail, immigration detention, juvenile detention, state or federal prison). To apply, send a letter via postal mail requesting a Commissary Microgrant that includes your name, committed name, age, pronouns, inmate ID number, address, payment method, and instructions for deposit to:

Trans Lifeline

Inside Advocacy

**548 Market Street, PMB 15337
San Francisco, CA 94104**

The Post-Release Microgrants provides a \$1,500 microgrant for housing and other reentry needs (as funds allow) to people who identify as trans and/or nonbinary who are formerly incarcerated in the US and have been released within the past year. Prior recipients are not eligible to reapply. To apply, send a letter via postal mail requesting a Post-Release Microgrant that includes your name, committed name, age, pronouns, inmate ID number, address, payment method, and instructions for deposit to the Inside Advocacy address above or visit the website.

TRANSGENDER LAW CENTER (TLC)  

PO Box 70976, Oakland, CA 94612
Collect: 510.380.8229
<https://transgenderlawcenter.org>

A national trans-led advocacy organization. The Legal Information Helpdesk provides basic information about laws and policies that affect transgender people across many areas, including 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 transgender and LGBTQ+ people, medical information about transition-related healthcare, and reentry resources.

TRANSGENDER LEGAL DEFENSE & EDUCATION FUND

520 8th Avenue, Suite 2204, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 646.862.9396

www.tldef.org

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.

LGBTQI+

308



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 216](#).

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. Because other legal deadlines may apply though, 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, 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.

LGBTQI+
310

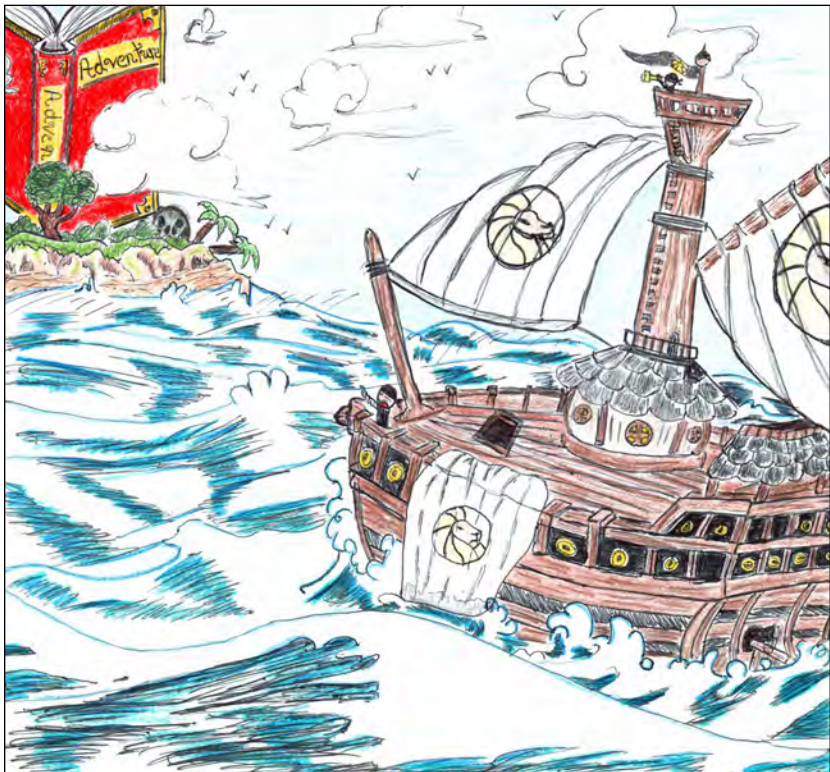
For organizations that specialize in helping transgender people and other LGBTQI+ people, please consider reaching out to the **National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)**, the **Transgender Law Center (TLC)**, and the **Sylvia Rivera Law Project** listed in this chapter.

More information on PREA starts on [page 226](#).

Youth

IN THE WORLD, NO ONE IS PERFECT. EVEN IF YOU KEEP PURSUING PERFECTION, YOU'LL NEVER REACH IT. BUT ALONG THE WAY, YOU'LL BECOME SOMETHING GREAT.

- NARUTO UZUMAKI



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY A. WILLIAMS



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. This information can be found at www.ny.gov/programs/raise-age-0.

In 2023, the law was amended. The statute of limitations was extended, allowing cases for conduct occurring at age 16 or 17 to be brought up until age 20 in some instances. For more information visit <https://nyuj.org/resources/fy-2023-new-york-state-budgets-impact-on-bail-discovery-and-other-criminal-justice-reforms>.

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.

YOUTH
314

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)

www.theanimationproject.org

A therapeutic workforce development program that teaches animation skills to low-income NYC youth.

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 currently incarcerated, unhoused, on probation, living in the shelter system, or have recently returned to their communities. 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.

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)  

www.cases.org

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

Telephone: 212.553.6300

Nathaniel Clinic

2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 212.553.6708

Provides educational, employment, behavioral health, and related services to individuals who are court-ordered to participate in its alternative-to-incarceration and alternative-to-detention programs, as well as those who participate in voluntary programs. Services offered through various programs include comprehensive screening and assessment, case management, education and employment services, mentoring, in-home family therapy, state-licensed mental health treatment, substance use disorder counseling, assistance with obtaining public benefits, service-

learning projects, paid internships, assistance developing career plans, college placement, and retention services. Visit the website for specific program requirements and referral information.

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 court-involved youth including case management, financial literacy and life skills workshops, civic engagement opportunities, community benefits projects, internships, unsubsidized job placements, mentoring, and sexual health education. Visit the website for more information and requirements.

THE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE



<https://childrensvillage.org>

400 East Fordham Road, 6th Floor, Bronx, NY 10468

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.

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: 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 305, 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—YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT**  

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, 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

www.gosonyc.org

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

2501 Grand Concourse, 3rd Floor, Bronx, NY 10457

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 42](#).

POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE (PAL)—JUVENILE JUSTICE

www.palnyc.org

991 Longwood Avenue, Bronx, NY 10459
Telephone: 718.991.2447 x28 or 646.565.8252

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 Bronx and Harlem locations offer Teen Programming that provides counseling, tutoring, and other support to underserved youth ages 13–19.

POSSIBILITY PROJECT—YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAM



Mailing Address: 2578 Broadway #103, New York NY, 10025

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 on Mondays and Wednesdays during after-school hours from August through December. Recruitment occurs in July and August with rolling admission throughout the program. Visit the website for information on how to schedule a meeting.

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

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

<https://youthrepresent.org>

Provides free comprehensive legal services to low-income NYC youth under the age of 26, 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 criminal 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



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.

ALI FORNEY CENTER (AFC)

Headquarters: 307 West 38th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10018
Telephone: 212.222.3427
www.aliforneycenter.org

Drop-In Center

307 West 38th Street, 3rd Floor New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.206.0574

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 / Text: 929.357.0768

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, 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.

GENERATION NYC

<https://growingupnyc.cityofnewyork.us/generationnyc>

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)



201 West 148th Street, New York 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.

THE JEWISH BOARD—CROSS ROADS YOUTH CLINIC

A mental health clinic for young people ages 14–26. Offers one-on-one care, group therapy, family support, medication management, and opportunities to connect with peers. Accepts Medicaid, private health insurance, and offers a sliding scale fee for those without insurance.

See the full listing for The Jewish Board on [page 142](#).

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.

WHATSOK

Helpline: 888.773.8368

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

THE COSMOS IS WITHIN US. WE ARE MADE OF STAR-STUFF.
WE ARE A WAY FOR THE UNIVERSE TO KNOW ITSELF.

— CARL SAGAN



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY GABRIEL OLIVARES

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, early childhood mental health services for families with children ages 0–5; 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.

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, healthcare and counseling, specialized eye and dental 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.

HR 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.

IN ARMS REACH, INC.

160 Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031**Telephone: 212.650.5894**<https://inarmsreach.net>

Provides services to low-income children and families, including children of incarcerated parents. Integrated programs involve mentoring, tutoring, free weekend visitation trips, college prep, and youth development. An appointment is needed for intake.

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OF THE INCARCERATED

<http://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu>

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 virtual 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 visitation; and youth development workshops, recreation, and peer support for children of incarcerated parents.

See the full listing for Osborne Association on [page 42](#).

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, or sign-up for virtual community programming, 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

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.

NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DOE)—EARLYLEARN

Telephone: 718.935.2009

www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/earlylearn-nyc



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/caregivers/caring-for-children.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, 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 194](#).

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.

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.

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: 855.243.1042

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).

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 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. Find a PDF version 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.

FAMILY LEGAL CARE



55 Broadway, Suite 2002, New York, NY 10006

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 and requests for information by mail 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: 212.341.3322

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 344](#).

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>. 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 

Customer Services Walk-In Center

151 West Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10013

Child Support Helpline: 888.208.4485 / TTY: 866.875.9975

www.childsupport.ny.gov/dcse/home.html

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.

Bronx County Contact Information

Mailing Address: Bronx County Support Unit, PO Box 830, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013

Family Court: Bronx County Family Court, 900 Sheridan Avenue, Bronx, NY 10451

Kings (Brooklyn) County Contact Information

Mailing Address: Kings County Support Unit, PO Box 830, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013

Family Court: Kings County Family Court, 330 Jay Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

New York County Contact Information

Mailing Address: New York County Support Unit, PO Box 830, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013

Family Court: New York County Family Court, 60 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10013

Queens County Contact Information

Mailing Address: Queens County Support Unit, PO Box 830, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013

Family Court: Queens County Family Court, 151-20 Jamaica Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11432

Richmond (Staten Island) County Contact Information

Mailing Address: Richmond County Support Unit, PO Box 830, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013

Family Court: Richmond County Family Court, 100 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island, NY 10301

NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)— OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES (OCSS)

151 West Broadway, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10013

Child Support Helpline: 888.208.4485

www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/child-support-services.page

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, finding a job, 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, debt reduction pro-

grams, mediation services, and the Support Through Employment Program (STEP).

Provides programs for noncustodial parents to reduce child support orders and arrears owed. Contact for more information on programs, including eligibility and applications.

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.

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. Divorce mediation offered on a sliding scale fee schedule. 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 HELPLINE

Helpline: 855.427.2736

www.nationalparenthelpline.org

Provides emotional support and advocacy for parents and caregivers, to youth of all ages, Mon–Fri 1pm–10pm (10am–7pm PST).

The Job Search

Contents

Organizations for Job Seekers	350
Job Search Assistance & Placement	351
Online Resources	365
Starting Your Own Business	366
Preparing for the Job Search	369
What You Can Do Before Leaving Prison	370
What You Can Do Upon Release	371
Avoiding Discrimination in Your Job Search	377
What To Do While Unemployed	381
Assessing Your Skills	382
Personal Skills Worksheet	383
Writing a Resume	386
Sample Resumes	389
How to Use a Resume	396
Ways to Look for a Job	397
Applying for a Job	399
Writing a Cover Letter	400
Filling Out a Job Application	403
Interviewing for a Job	408
After the Interview	417
Being Offered a Job	418
Helpful Hints in Adjusting to a New Job	419
Leaving a Job	420
Being Unemployed	421
Personal Fact Sheet	422
Record of Job Contacts Made	423

Organizations for Job Seekers

WE GOT TURNED DOWN, WE FAILED, HAD SETBACKS, HAD TO START OVER A LOT OF TIMES. BUT WE KEPT GOING AT IT. IN ANYBODY'S CASE THAT'S ALWAYS THE DISTINGUISHING FACTOR.

— NIPSEY HUSSLE



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ARTWORK BY KEYA PONDER

Job Search Assistance & Placement

BRONXWORKS

Telephone: 646.393.4000 / Hotline: 718.731.3114
<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 the hotline for more information on programs, eligibility, and locations of services.

CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (CEO)



Offers individuals just coming home from prison immediate paid employment, skills training, and ongoing career support.

See the full listing for CEO on [page 35](#).

DEFY VENTURES

Telephone: 800.680.6343
www.defyventures.org

Provides employment readiness, reentry planning, personal development, and entrepreneurship training to individuals who are formerly and currently incarcerated. Programs include CEO of Your New Life (CEO YNL), Entrepreneurship Bootcamp, Business Accelerator, and alumni programs. Email info@defyventures.org for more information about the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp program.

THE DOE FUND—READY, WILLING & ABLE

Administration Office

345 East 102nd Street, Suite 305, New York, NY 10029

Telephone: 646.672.2973

www.doe.org

Provides paid transitional work, transitional housing, education, career development and training, personalized case management, and social services 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.

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

Telephone: 212.757.0915

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.

Once hired, experienced staff support each person's professional development through on-the-job and classroom training. Trainees work 40 hours a week in a paid position caring for open space throughout NYC developing horticultural- and core-skills designed to support the next steps of their career path. Trainees receive certificates upon completion of the program.

People currently incarcerated on Rikers Island or in a 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.

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 194](#).

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—CAREER SERVICES

www.nypl.org/education/adults/career-employment/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. All services are either

in-person or virtual (Zoom or phone). 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. Appointments are required for all services. Visit <https://nypcls.libcal.com> to make an appointment.

The Career Coaching Support service offers feedback and suggested edits on resumes and insight on how to improve job search strategies and establish/achieve 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. The Resilience Coaching service provides in-depth support for creating a resilient mindset for the job search and other life events. Visit the website to schedule an appointment or email careerservices@nypl.org for more information.

Additionally, the annual StartUP! Business Plan Competition awards up to \$15,000 to winning applicants to start a small business. Visit www.nypl.org/help/services/startup for more information and deadlines.

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, financial literacy, and starting, running, and growing a business. Offers free one-on-one resume and career help (via drop-in sessions, email, and online Zoom meetings) and meetings with a Job Information Resource Librarian for feedback on a resume or cover letter, 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

www.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

Telephone: 718.993.8880

Goodwill Industries–1620 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx, NY 10473

Serves: Clason Point Gardens, Monroe, Sack Wern, and Soundview Houses

Telephone: 347.291.8050

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, Wald and 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: 718.285.8488

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 Brooklyn Workforce Collaboration (manufacturing, industrial businesses, 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), 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; call **347.844.0220** for more information. 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 118](#).

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 246](#).

DRESS FOR SUCCESS WORLDWIDE—NEW YORK PROGRAM

32 East 31st Street, New York, NY 10016

Telephone: 646.233.4959

www.dressforsuccessnyc.org

Provides professional attire and employment retention services for women. Clients are referred by partner agencies, which include homeless shelters and job-training programs.

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 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 at least 18 years old, 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 popula-

tion, 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: 347.773.4623

Provides job training, placement, advancement, and lifelong career support. Programs include HOPEworks (focused on essential skills including math and digital literacy), NYC CoolRoofs, Green and Clean HVAC Program, Sustainable South Bronx (construction), Intervine (green infrastructure projects), and YouthBuild (skills training in construction, landscaping, civic engagement, and leadership for jobseekers ages 18–24). 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, be legally authorized to work in the US, and be age 18 or over. Visit the website to register for an information session.

HOT BREAD KITCHEN

c/o Chelsea Market, 75 9th Avenue, Suite 0610, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.540.9070

<https://hotbreadkitchen.org>

Offers programs and services for women and gender-expansive people, immigrant women, and women of color who are interested in a career in the food industry, facility management, and more. Visit the website for current program offerings.

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
<https://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 opportunities 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/dca

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

132 West 31st Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 646.723.4053 x101

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. Call or visit the website for information about becoming a client and to apply for services.

Preparing for the Job Search

What You Can Do Before Leaving Prison

Take advantage of programs in your facility

Take advantage of programs and services at your facility, as they may help you prepare for release. You can ask your facility to invite people from community agencies or private companies that do a large amount of hiring. You can start reaching out to organizations that provide services to people to help them prepare 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 29](#) and Reentry Task Forces by county starting on [page 30](#).

Gather the documents that 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 to collect documentation while you are still incarcerated. At the very least, be sure to have 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.

The following may 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 258](#)
- Permanent Resident Card (green card, for non-US citizens), more information found on [page 243](#)
- Proof of education (college transcripts or HSE certificate), more information found on [page 54](#)
- Working papers (required for people under 18 years of age), more information found on [page 327](#)

- 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 374](#) for more information.

If you were vaccinated while incarcerated, make sure you are given your vaccination card upon release as some jobs require proof of vaccination. For more information on replacing COVID-19 vaccination cards see [page 25](#).

These documents may not be easy to get while you are incarcerated. 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.

Personal and professional references may be required to apply for jobs, to get back into school, and to receive certificates that can help restore 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/research-and-publications>.

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.

Remember that some occupational licenses may be denied to you for certain employment unless you have one of the certificates.

To learn about defending yourself against job discrimination, see [page 377](#).

Applying for a certificate

For **Certificates of Relief from Disabilities**, you must apply to the court that sentenced you, unless:

- 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.

Certificates in these cases are issued by the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS). After release, there is no waiting time 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 2

1220 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12226-2050

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 the application does not say you must include evidence of rehabilitation in your application packet, it may be helpful to do so. Things that you may want to provide are:

- 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 in their resources portal at www.lac.org/resources.

Remember, even if your convictions took place outside of New York State, or in a federal court, you may apply directly upon release from custody to the Certificate Review Unit.

374 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.

Clean up 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.

Reviewing your rap sheet

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 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. Know that 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 a less-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.

Avoiding Discrimination in Your 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.

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 or 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 cash 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 **212.243.313**. 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.

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 386](#) and in the *Interview* section on [page 408](#).

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 any 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 220](#).

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>.

Demonstrate that you are a person who has undergone 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.

Explore volunteer work for the advantages it offers

Volunteer work has many advantages. While volunteering, you gain experience and can make contacts that can later help you find a paying 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 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 in a certain skill and your preference toward a particular field of work.

If you would prefer 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/ExploreCareers/Assessments/skills.aspx. You can reach out to the job information center of 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 telephone, text, and email. | <input type="checkbox"/> I know how to use Microsoft Office Programs: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can enter information into a computer. | <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, tune, repair, or operate engines or other machinery.

I can assess, repair, or upgrade computers and phones.

I can repair automobiles.

I can understand and use blue-prints.

I can construct, maintain, or restore buildings.

I can make or repair furniture.

Skills in Working with People or Providing Services to People

I can diffuse difficult situations between people.

I am caring, sensitive, and people-oriented.

I can help people solve problems.

I enjoy teaching people a new skill.

I enjoy working with all kinds of people.

I can talk easily and put people at ease.

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. It should demonstrate that you have the right qualifications, experience, and skills for the job.

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.

Use action verbs to describe your experience

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, for example, 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 someone on the job at the facility's library or transitional services center? Have you ever exhibited leadership skills such as working with young people in a neighborhood 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 skill 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 since leaving school and can offer good explanations for time gaps in their work record (a return to 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 assume that a person with a strong record of employment or schooling is a more stable and 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, be sure to 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 in 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 the content of 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, save it to cloud storage (such as Google Drive), or email it to yourself and save it in your email inbox to access when needed. There are a number of free resources available online, so do not feel the need to pay for a service to create your resume.

If you need assistance with creating a digital copy of your resume, please see the *Computer Literacy* section of this book on [page 61](#).

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

- Plattsburgh State College, Plattsburgh, NY: current
- High School Equivalency Diploma, Elmira, NY: 2014
- Elmira CF Automotive Shop, 1,500 hours of training: 2011
- Henry Hudson High School, New York, NY: 2009
Electrical Shop, Automotive Shop, Mechanical Drawing

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE, 2011–2014

- NAACP, Elmira Correctional Facility
- Treasurer, Merrick Jaycees, Merrick Correctional Facility
- Transitional Services Assistant, Little Kills Correctional Facility

WORK EXPERIENCE

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, adhered to all company policies and procedures

1 →

2 →

3 →

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 | NYEM, 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 →** Jobs you are applying to might be remote. 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.
- If 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 professional email addresses

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 versions and ordering. 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 to separate the names, although a period is more commonly used. Generally, it is best to avoid numeric characters in your professional email address, but you can use them if the situation demands it. You also may want to make sure it is easy to share verbally with someone, for instance on the phone. It is best to not use your year of birth, or 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 last name: nejimenez@emaildomain.com

- Last name and first two letters in first name with a period:
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

There is no one definitive list of companies that hire formerly incarcerated people. This section outlines some of the ways to look for a job. Reaching out to organizations listed in this book, especially in the *Organizations for Job Seekers* section, starting on [page 350](#), may be helpful in your job search.

Let people know that 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, ie. walk into the store and ask a manager if they are hiring.

Find 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 may also need an email address for 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 show up 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 61](#).

Contact the employer 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.

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 35](#)), include 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
- Mention the job 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
- Request an interview and include a phone number and email address where you can be reached

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
- 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:

- 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 422](#) 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 377](#) 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 you have attended. 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 went to any special type of trade or vocational school, include that information. If you've taken college classes, but have not received a degree, write the number of credits that you have earned, and in which major you were working.

Work experience/employment history

For this section, you will have to know and list your work experience and employment history starting with the most recent and going back. For each, be prepared to give the name of the company or employer, its address, 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 386](#).

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 teach-

ers. 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	Highest Grade/ Degree

APPLYING FOR A JOB

406

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

The job interview

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, and arrive early and be patient
- For remote interviews: test the technology, and set up the space and environment
- Wear professional clothing

Prepare 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. Remember, 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 shows you are qualified for 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. Remember to practice what you will say before your interview by writing down your answers to a variety of interview questions.

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, 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 377](#) to learn more about answering questions related to your conviction and avoiding discrimination.

It is important to know what information is illegal 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 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 company or 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 find and know 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 an 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 have answered 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.

For 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 422](#), in case you are asked to complete a paper application form at your interview. Also, you may want to write down the name and phone number of the person who will interview you and have it ready. 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 right 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 left enough time in between them, so you will not be late to the second one.

For Remote Interviews

Test the Technology: Be sure to familiarize yourself with whatever technology is being used. If you are using a video-conferencing platform, be sure to 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.

Limit Distractions: Find the quietest space you have available for your interview. If you have earphones, use them to limit background noises. If you are using a video-conferencing platform, try to 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.

Wear 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. If you are nervous (and it's perfectly normal to be nervous during an interview), try not to fidget. 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 asked to tell about yourself generally, mention only those 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 only 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 378](#).

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. 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 find out more information 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 close 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 letter before sending 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.
- Share you are fit for the position by highlighting your skills and expertise that make you the right candidate for the job.
- Show enthusiasm. Make sure 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 any 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 believe that I have the skills and experience to ensure that the organization continues to do great work, since I have spent three years working in a similar role.

I can tell AAA Plumbing is a special place to work, and I would be thrilled to join 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 555-0911.

Best regards,
Nelson Jimenez

After the Interview

Being Offered a Job

There are several factors to take into consideration before accepting a job offer. But remember, it is much easier to find a job when you already have one. 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.

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 there will be opportunities for earning extra money on the job by working overtime.

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.

Other factors worth your consideration

- Commuting time and costs to and from the job

- 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

Helpful Hints in Adjusting to a New Job

Be dependable and responsible

Do not be late for work or be absent without having a good 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 very large extent on your ability to listen and follow directions. There are usually valid reasons why you are told to perform tasks the way that you are.

Get along well with your 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.

Learn from constructive criticism

Constructive criticism and performance reviews are a part of every job. Do not take criticism personally. 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 work experience. Still, it is important to remember that your main reason for being at work is to perform your job. Don't let personal issues interfere with work. It is unfair to take a lot of time talking with coworkers about your personal affairs when it can end up jeopardizing both of your jobs.

Leaving a Job

If you decide your current job is not the right fit, it is a good idea 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 new 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?

Being Unemployed

Unemployment Insurance (UI) provides temporary financial help to workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own. 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 106](#)), 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 Address	Area of Study	Degree Received
High School: _____		
Vocational: _____		
College: _____		
Other Training: _____		

Employment/Work Experience

Company Name & Address	Name of Supervisor	From/To	Reason For Leaving
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

422

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

Index

Numbers

1in6 [146](#)
30th Street Intake for Men [84](#)
311 [219](#)

A

A Beautiful HEART Ministries [279](#)
Abraham House [91](#)
Acacia Network—Greenhope Services for Women, Inc. [91](#), [279](#)
A Call For Change [147](#)
Access-A-Ride [276](#)
ACCESS NYC [109](#)
Access to Benefits (A2B) Helpline [109](#)
ACCES-VR [269](#)
ACE Programs for the Homeless [95](#)
ACLU National Prison Project [308](#)
ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project [278](#)
ACS ConnectMe [347](#)
ActionNYC [244](#)
ADA National Network [266](#)
ADA National Network—Northeast ADA Center [267](#)
Addiction Care Interventions [155](#)
Adoption Options [331](#)
Adult Family Intake Center [86](#)
Advance Care Planning [128](#)
Advocates for Children [314](#)
Affordable Rental Lotteries [100](#)
AI-Anon—NYC [164](#)
Albert Einstein College of Medicine—Montefiore-Einstein Division of Substance Abuse [158](#)
Alcoholics Anonymous [164](#)
Ali Forney Center [299](#), [323](#)
Alliance for Positive Change [125](#)
Alliance of Families for Justice [33](#)
American Cancer Society [129](#), [286](#)
American Heart Association [166](#)
American Indian College Fund [71](#)
American Liver Foundation [138](#)
America Works [359](#)
Animation Project [314](#)
Anti-Violence Project [147](#), [299](#)

Anxiety and Depression Association of America 149
Argus Community 133, 159
Arms Acres—Outpatient Services 159
Article 23A 377
Artistic Noise 315
Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund 72
Avenues for Justice (AFJ) 315

B

Background Checks 378
Bail 199
Bailey House 97
Bard Prison Initiative 73
 Bard Microcolleges 62
Barrier Free Living 271
Bedford Hills College Program 77
Bedford-Stuyvesant Family Health Center 125
Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator 155
Bennington College 74
Birth Certificate 213
Black & Pink NYC 300
Black Veterans for Social Justice, Inc. 261
Board of Elections in New York City 206, 210
Body Politic—Covid-19 26
BOOM!Health 133
Bowery Mission 95, 159, 283
Bowery Residents' Committee 33
Breaking Ground 96
Breast and Cervical Cancer Detection 283
Brennan Center for Justice 185
Bridging Access to Care 134
Bronx Community College—Adult Basic Education & Training Program 58
Bronx Community College—Future Now 62
BronxConnect 316
Bronx Defenders 186
Bronx Independent Living Services 274
Bronx Supreme Court Law Library 198
BronxWorks 96, 244, 351
Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled 274
Brooklyn Center for Psychotherapy—New Directions Substance Use Clinic
 156
Brooklyn Defender Services 187, 245
Brooklyn District Attorney's Office—Re-entry Bureau 34

Brooklyn Public Library (BPL) 5
Adult Learning Centers 55
Bard Microcollege 62
Business & Career Services 355
Community Health 124
Computer Classes 61
Culture Pass 333
Financial Services 116
Immigrant Services 242
Services for Older Adults 289
Youth & Family Services 322
Brooklyn Workforce Innovations 359
Bureau of Labor Statistics—The Occupational Outlook Handbook 365
Burial Assistance 27
Business Outreach Center Network 367

C

Cabrini Immigrant Service 245
Call BlackLine 148
Callen-Lorde Community Health Center 300
CAMBA 84, 118, 245, 360
CareerZone 365
Cathedral Community Cares 112
Catholic Charities 246
Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services 34, 139, 316
Center for Anti-Violence Education 301
Center for Community Alternatives 35, 156, 317
Center for Constitutional Rights 197
Center for Employment Opportunities 35, 351
Center for Family Representation 341
Center for Hearing and Communication 272
Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York 273
Center for Justice Innovation 36
Center for Urban Community Services 92
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 129, 138, 214
Centers Health Care 295
Center, The 303
Certificate of Good Conduct 190, 372
Certificate of Relief from Disabilities 372
Charles B. Wang Community Health Center 126
Child Center of NY 330
Child Find of America—Parent Help 346
Child Health Plus 131
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder 149

Children of Promise, NYC 330
Children's Aid 331
Children's Village—Harlem Justice Community Program 317
Child Support 39, 108, 338
Chinese-American Planning Council 58, 246, 291, 360
Chosen Family Law Center 301
Circles of Support 36
City Bar Justice Center—Veterans Assistance Project 261
City University of New York (CUNY) 65
 Adult Literacy/HSE/ESL Program 58
 Citizenship Now! 246
 Office of Veterans Affairs 261
Clean Slate Act 50
Clothing 39, 84, 85, 95, 113, 133, 327, 361
Coalition for the Homeless 96, 112, 113
College & Community Fellowship 63
Columbia Human Rights Law Review—A Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual 197
Columbia University—Center for Justice—Justice Through Code 36
Coming Home Program 127
Commercial Bail Bond 202
Community Access—Howie the Harp Advocacy Center 140
Community Connections for Youth—Parent Peer Support Program 331
Community Health Action of Staten Island 134
Community Healthcare Network 126
Community Mediation Services (CMS) 346
Community Reentry Assistant Network 122
Community Service Society 37, 118, 131, 187
Computer Literacy 61
Cornell Academic Reentry Services 75
Cornell Prison Education Program 74
Correctional Association of NY 45
Correctional Health Services 122
Court Watch NYC 46
Covenant House New York 97, 324
Cover Letter 400
COVID-19 Tests 23
COVID-19 Treatment 25
COVID-19 Vaccine Appointment 24
Create, Inc. 160
Crime Victims Treatment Center 147, 283
Criminal Procedure Law § 160.59 376
Crip Justice 46
Crisis Respite Centers 139
Critical Resistance—New York City 46
Crystal Meth Anonymous Intergroup 165

Culture Pass [333](#)
CUNY Fatherhood Academy [67](#)
CUNY Lehman College—Reentry@Lehman [63](#)
CUNY School of Law—Formerly Incarcerated Law Student Advocacy Association [63](#)

D

Deaf Hotline [272](#)
Defend Our Movements [180, 185](#)
Defy Ventures [37, 351](#)
Dental Services [40, 94, 122, 126, 127, 301, 331](#)
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance [149](#)
Destination Tomorrow [302](#)
Disability Information and Access Line [25](#)
Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) Program [102](#)
Disability Rights New York [267](#)
Disaster Distress Helpline [150](#)
Division of Minority and Women’s Business Development [366](#)
DNA Collection [175](#)
Doe Fund [92, 352](#)
Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline [347](#)
Domestic Violence [108, 271, 272, 282, 285, 286, 290, 291, 335, 337, 347](#)
Door (The) [324](#)
Dorot [291](#)
Dress for Success Worldwide [361](#)
Drive Change [37, 352](#)

E

Eating Disorders [150, 157](#)
Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage [115, 294](#)
Election Protection Hotline [206](#)
Electronic Frontier Foundation [180, 185](#)
Elite Learners—Reentry Services [317](#)
Elmcor Youth and Adult Activities, Inc. [160](#)
Emerald Isle Immigration Center [247](#)
Emma’s Torch [247](#)
Empire State Development—Division of Minority and Women’s Business Development [366](#)
Employment Application [406](#)
Employment Benefits [418](#)
Employment Discrimination [377](#)
Envision Freedom Fund [46, 248](#)
EPRA—Job Placement Services [361](#)
Eviction Information [101](#)

exalt youth 318
Exodus Transitional Community 38, 156, 318
Exoneration Initiative 187
Exponents 38, 157

F

Face Coverings 23
FAFSA 70
Fair Chance Act 378
Fair Chance for Housing Act 99
Families for Freedom 248
Family Justice Centers 282, 291, 335
Family Legal Care 342
Family Planning Benefit Program 131
Family Reentry Program 98, 294
FEDCAP 272
Federal Bonding Program 356
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) 375
Federal Bureau of Prisons 203, 231
Federal Defenders of New York 188
Federal Trade Commission 115, 218
Fentanyl 168
Finaid 71
Financial Aid 67
Focus Forward Project 38
Food 39, 91, 112, 245
Food Bank for New York City 112
Food Stamps 111
Forging Ahead for Community Empowerment and Support 39, 135
Fortune Society 39, 92, 135
Foster Care (ACS) 342
Fountain House 141
Franklin Shelter and Intake Center for Women 84
Free Clinic 127
Freedom Agenda 47
Freedom for Immigrants 249
Future Now 62

G

Gam-Anon for New York 164
Gathering Place 84
Generation NYC 325
Getting Out and Staying Out 40, 319
Girls Educational and Mentoring Services 325
Girl Vow 319

GMHC 136
Goddard Riverside—Options Center 59
Good Call 175, 188
Goodwill Industries—Bronx Ace Program & PAL Program 141
Goodwill NYNJ—Workforce Development 361
Grace Institute 284
Grand Central Neighborhood Social Services Corporation—Mainchance
Drop-in Center 84
Grandparent Resource Center 291, 334
Grant Information 107
Green Cards 243
Greenhope Services for Women, Inc. 91
Greenwich House—Center for Healing 161
Growing Up Healthy Hotline 286
Growing Up NYC 347
GrowNYC 113

H

Haircuts 94
Haitian-American Community Coalition 136
Halfway Housing 90
HALT Act 224
Harlem Independent Living Center 274
Harm Reduction 125, 133, 137, 167
Health Care Proxy 128
Health Plan Marketplace 130
Hearing Loss Association of America 273
Hepatitis C 138
Hetrick-Martin Institute 302, 325
High School Equivalency 53
Hispanic AIDS Forum, Inc. 136
Hispanic Scholarship Fund 72
HIV/AIDS 38, 96, 131, 132, 147, 163, 326
HIV Special Needs Plan 131
HIV Uninsured Care Programs 133
Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen 113
Home Energy Assistance Program (help with heating bills) 108
Hope Program 362
Horticultural Society of New York 352
Hot Bread Kitchen 284, 362
Hour Children 93, 280, 332
Housing Court Answers 104
Housing Works 97
Housing Works Community Healthcare—Re-entry Program 40
How Our Lives Link Altogether 320

Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison [75](#)
Humane Alternatives to Long-Term (HALT) Solitary Confinement Act [224](#)

I

idealist [366](#)
Identity House [302](#)
Identity Theft Recovery [218](#)
IDNYC [213](#)
Imani House, Inc.—Adult Education Program [59](#)
Immigrant Defense Project [249](#)
Immigration Advocates Network (IAN)—National Immigration Legal Services Directory [250](#)
Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) [203](#), [232](#)
Immigration Equality [250](#)
Immigration Legal Services Directory [250](#)
In Arms Reach, Inc. [332](#)
Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee [47](#)
Indeed [366](#)
Independent Living Centers [273](#)
Industrial Workers of the World [47](#)
Information for People Convicted of a Sex Offense [214](#)
Informed Immigrant [250](#)
Inmate Jail Release Services [210](#)
Innocence Project [189](#)
Institute for Career Development [274](#)
Institute for Family Health [126](#)
Internal Revenue Service [117](#)
International OCD Foundation [150](#)
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America [262](#)
IRS [117](#)

J

Jailhouse Lawyer’s Handbook [197](#)
Jailhouse Lawyer’s Manual [197](#)
James J. Peters VA Medical Center [259](#)
JBI International [268](#)
Jewish Board—Mental Health Clinics [142](#)
 Cross Roads Youth Clinic [326](#)
JMacForFamilies [47](#)
Job Application Information [403](#)
Job Discrimination [377](#)
Job Interview Information [408](#)
Job Path [275](#)
Job Search Assistance & Placement [351](#)
Jobs-Plus [357](#)

John Jay College—Institute for Justice and Opportunity [64, 371](#)
Prison-to-College Pipeline (P2CP) [77](#)
Just Detention International [145](#)
JustFix.nyc [104](#)
JustLeadershipUSA [40](#)
Juvenile Justice [323](#)

K

Kings County Supreme Court Law Library [198](#)

L

Ladies of Hope Ministries [280](#)
Lambda Legal [189, 303](#)
Latinx Therapy [152](#)
Laundry [84, 96, 133](#)
LawHelpNY [198](#)
Legal Action Center [190](#)
Legal Aid Society [109, 190, 250](#)
Legal Hand [191](#)
Legal Services for Tenants [103](#)
Legal Services NYC [192](#)
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center (The Center)
[303](#)
Less Is More Act [222](#)
LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York [192, 303](#)
LGBTQ+ Guide [299](#)
Lighthouse Guild Vision Plus Health [275](#)
LinkedIn [366](#)
Literacy Partners [59](#)
Living Will [128](#)
Long COVID [25](#)
love is respect [326](#)
Lower Eastside Service Center [161](#)

M

Mail Service [84, 94, 96, 114](#)
Mainchance Drop-in Center [84](#)
Make the Road New York [251](#)
MaleSurvivor [148](#)
Marymount Manhattan College [77](#)
Mediation [346](#)
Medicaid [114, 131](#)
Medicaid Buy-In Program for Working People with Disabilities [131](#)
Medicare [115, 131, 294](#)
MedLine Plus [129](#)

Mercy Center—Immigration Services 252
Metropolitan Council on Housing 100
Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) 275, 292
Mixteca Organization Inc. 252
Mobile Crisis Teams 151
Mobilization for Justice 91, 193
Money Management International 119
Mount Sinai Institute for Advanced Medicine—Morningside Clinic 127
Mustard Seed Counseling Services 145

N

NADAP 353
Naloxone 168
Name Change 308
Narcotics Anonymous 165
National Alliance on Mental Illness—NYC Metro 142
National Association for Shoplifting Prevention 166
National Association of Anorexia Nervosa & Associated Disorders 150
National Center for Lesbian Rights 303
National Domestic Violence Hotline 286
National Eating Disorders Association 150
National Harm Reduction Coalition 168
National Institute of Mental Health 143
National Lawyers Guild 178
National Parent Helpline 347
National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated
332
National Sexual Assault Hotline 227
Neighborhood Association for Inter-Cultural Affairs—Legal Services 104
Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem 193
Network Support Services, Inc. 41
New Directions Substance Use Clinic 156
New Women New Yorkers 253
New York City Bar Legal Referral Service 193
New York City Free Clinic 127
New York Counseling for Change 145
New York County Law Library 198
New York County Lawyers Association 194
 Certificates Project 41
 Civil Appeals Project 194
 Legal Counseling Project 194
 Project Restore 41, 354
 Sealing Project 41
 Social Security SDNY Project 276
 State Central Registry Project 335, 354

Volunteer Lawyer for the Day Consumer Debt Program [119](#)
 New York Foundling [336](#)
 New York Legal Assistance Group [194](#)
 New York Peace Institute [346](#)
 New York Public Library (NYPL) [5](#)
 Andrew Heiskell Braille and Talking Book Library [268](#)
 Career Services [354](#)
 Culture Pass [333](#)
 English Classes [55](#)
 Family & Cultural Programming [334](#)
 Financial Literacy Services [116](#)
 Immigrant Services [242](#)
 Services for People with Disabilities [269](#)
 TechConnect [61](#)
 New York Relay Center [266](#)
 New York State Human Rights Law [377](#)
 New York State Justice Center [231](#)
 New York University [78](#)
 Nontraditional Employment for Women [284, 363](#)
 North American Syringe Exchange Network [168](#)
 North County Community College—Second Chance PELL Program [78](#)
 NY Executive Law § 296.16 [377](#)
 NYC-Arts— Cultural Guide for Seniors [292](#)
 NYPD Gang Database [180](#)
 NYU Langone Medical Center—The Steven A. Cohen Military Family
 Center [262](#)

NYC

NYC—311 [219](#)
 NYC 988 [167](#)
 NYC Administration for Children’s Services [323, 342](#)
 NYC Board of Correction [218](#)
 NYC Central Booking [204](#)
 NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board [176, 220](#)
 NYC Commission on Human Rights [138, 220, 290, 299](#)
 NYC Comptroller’s Office—LGBTQ+ Guide [299](#)
 NYC COVID-19 Updates [21](#)
 NYC Department for the Aging [290](#)
 NYC Department for the Aging—Grandparent Resource Center [334](#)
 NYC Department of Consumer and Worker Protection [221, 367](#)
 NYC Department of Correction [204, 230](#)
 NYC Department of Education [57](#)
 NYC Department of Education—EarlyLearn [334](#)
 NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene [124, 128, 132, 213](#)
 Office of Vital Records [213](#)

NYC Department of Homeless Services [82](#)
 NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development [98, 100, 102](#)
 NYC Department of Sanitation—donateNYC [114](#)
 NYC Department of Small Business Services [260, 357](#)
 NYC Department of Transportation [270](#)
 NYC Department of Veterans' Services [260](#)
 NYC Department of Youth and Community Development [323](#)
 NYC Food Policy—Community Food Connections [112](#)
 NYC Health + Hospitals [122](#)
 LGBTQIA+ Services [304](#)
 Street Health Outreach & Wellness (SHOW) Mobile Units [128](#)
 NYC Health—Child Care [347](#)
 NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) [97, 103, 357](#)
 NYC Housing Connect [100](#)
 NYC Human Resources Administration [108](#)
 Cash Assistance [110](#)
 Department of Social Services [131](#)
 Emergency Assistance [111](#)
 HIV/AIDS Services Administration [132](#)
 Homebase [99](#)
 Legal Services for Tenants [103](#)
 Office of Child Support Services [345](#)
 SNAP [111](#)
 NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities [271](#)
 NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs—ActionNYC [244](#)
 NYC Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence—Family Justice Centers [282, 291, 335](#)
 NYC Mayor's Office to Protect Tenants [103](#)
 NYC Public Advocate [222](#)
 NYC Quits [166](#)
 NYC Rental Assistance Programs [102](#)
 NYC Rent Freeze Program [102](#)
 NYC Small Business Services [367](#)
 NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission—Accessibility Dispatch Program [271](#)
 NYC Tuberculosis Provider Hotline [129](#)

NYS

NYS Child Protective Services Abuse Hotline [347](#)
 NYS Commission for the Blind [269](#)
 NYS Commission of Correction [230](#)
 NYS COVID-19 Hotline [21](#)
 NYS COVID-19 Updates [21](#)
 NYS Criminal Justice Services, Legal Services Office [375](#)

NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision [203](#), [217](#),
[229](#), [373](#)
 Office of Special Investigations [217](#)
 NYS Department of Education—ACCES-VR (Vocational Rehabilitation)
[269](#)
 NYS Department of Education—High School Equivalency [57](#)
 NYS Department of Health [130](#), [133](#), [282](#)
 NYS Department of Health—Advance Care Planning [128](#)
 NYS Department of Health—Office of Professional Medical Conduct
 (OPMC) [128](#)
 NYS Department of Labor [356](#), [365](#)
 NYS Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) [211](#)
 NYS Division of Homes and Community Renewal [102](#)
 NYS Division of Human Rights—Hate and Bias Prevention Unit [219](#)
 NYS Division of Veterans’ Services [260](#)
 NYS Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline [227](#), [347](#)
 NYS Higher Education Services Corporation [70](#)
 NYS HIV/AIDS Information and Counseling Hotline [132](#)
 NYS HOPEline [167](#)
 NYS Office for New Americans [243](#)
 NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities [270](#)
 NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports [155](#)
 NYS Office of Children and Family Services—Adult Protective Services
 (APS) [290](#)
 NYS Office of Children and Family Services—Juvenile Facilities [231](#)
 NYS Office of Mental Health [140](#)
 NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance—Child Support
 Services [344](#)
 NYS Office of the Inspector General [217](#)
 NYS Office of Victim Services [115](#)
 NYS Smokers’ Quitline [166](#)
 NYS Unified Court System—Name and/or Sex Designation Change [212](#)
 NYS COVID-19 Vaccination Hotline [21](#)

O

Occupational Licenses [372](#)
 Occupational Outlook Handbook [365](#)
 Odyssey House [161](#)
 Office of the City Clerk—Marriage Bureau [213](#)
 Office of the State Inspector General [230](#)
 Official Website of the City of New York [366](#)
 Olivieri Center Drop-in Center [85](#)
 OnPoint NYC [170](#)

Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow [60](#), [253](#), [363](#)
Osborne Association [42](#), [93](#), [157](#), [289](#), [304](#), [320](#), [333](#)
Overdose Prevention Centers [170](#)

P

PAL [320](#)
Paralyzed Veterans of America [263](#)
Parent Help [346](#)
Parole Preparation Project [195](#)
Part of the Solution [93](#)
PATH [88](#)
Peer Support Space [149](#)
Per Scholas Institute for Technology [60](#)
Phoenix House [162](#)
Pills Anonymous [165](#)
Planned Parenthood [137](#), [284](#)
Poison Control Center Hotline [130](#)
Police Athletic League—Juvenile Justice [320](#)
Possibility Project [321](#)
Post COVID-19 Care [25](#)
Postpartum Resource Center in New York [336](#)
Prenatal Care Assistance Program [131](#)
Prevention Assistance & Temporary Housing (PATH) [88](#)
Priority1 [260](#)
Prison Education Initiative [74](#)
Prison Education Program [78](#)
Prisoners' Legal Services of New York [137](#), [195](#)
Prison Legal News [48](#)
Prison Policy Initiative [49](#)
Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) [226](#)
Prison Scholar Fund [71](#)
Professional Licenses [372](#)
Project Hospitality [85](#)
Project LETS [149](#)
Project Renewal [94](#)
Protect Our Defenders [263](#)
Providence House [94](#), [280](#)
Psychiatric Advance Directive [139](#)
Public Access Law Libraries [198](#)
Public Benefits [108](#)
Puerto Rico Vital Records [214](#)

Q

Queens Center for Independence of the Disabled [274](#)

Queens Public Library 5
Adult Learner Program 56
Adult Learner Program & New Americans Program 56
Computer Classes 62
Culture Pass 333
Job & Business Academy 356
New Americans Program 56, 243
Prison, Jails, and Reentry Outreach 42
Queens Supreme Court Law Library 198
Queens Village Committee for Mental Health for J-CAP, Inc. 162
Queer Detainee Empowerment Project 253, 305

R

Raise the Age 312
Rap Sheet 37, 190, 374
Realization Center 157
Reduced-Fare MetroCard 292
Reentry Rocks 281
Release Aging People in Prison Project (RAPP) 49
Reproductive Freedom Project 278
Repro Legal Helpline 130, 286
ReServe 292
Resume Information 386
RevCore Recovery Center 143, 158
Richmond County Law Library 198
Right-to-Counsel 101
Right to Counsel NYC Coalition 102
Rising Ground—Steps to End Family Violence 281
Rising Hope, Inc.—Program in Ministry and Human Services 79
Riverside Church—Prison Ministry 43

S

Safe Horizon 285, 326, 337
Safe Passage Project 254
Sakhi for South Asian Women 285
Salary Information 418
Salary Transparency 380
Samaritan Daytop Village 162
SAMHSA 167
Sample Resumes 389
Sanctuary for Families 337
Schizophrenia & Psychosis Action Alliance 150
SCO Family of Services—Center for Family Life in Sunset Park 338
SCORE New York City 368
Sealing Criminal Records with Criminal Procedure Law § 160.59 376

Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) Program [102](#)
Senior Planet [293](#)
Service Program for Older People [293](#)
Services and Advocacy for LGBT Elders (SAGE) [293](#), [305](#)
Services for the UnderServed [143](#), [263](#)
Sex Crimes Helpline [287](#)
Sex Offense Resources [82](#), [145](#), [146](#)
Sexual Compulsives Anonymous of New York [165](#)
Sexual Health Clinic [124](#)
Sexual Violence Hotline [347](#)
Shawn Carter Foundation—Scholarship Fund [72](#)
Shelters [82](#)
Shiloh Consulting [146](#)
Shower [84](#), [85](#), [94](#), [95](#), [96](#), [133](#), [327](#)
Signal [186](#)
Single Parent Resource Center [333](#)
Social Justice Network [43](#)
Social Security Administration [211](#)
Starting Your Own Business [366](#)
Start Small Think Big [368](#)
Start Treatment & Recovery Centers [163](#)
Staten Island Center for Independent Living [274](#)
StateSide Legal [257](#)
State University of New York (SUNY) [65](#)
Steps to End Family Violence [281](#)
Steven A. Cohen Military Family Center [262](#)
St. John's Bread and Life [114](#)
Stop It Now! [146](#)
Street Health Outreach & Wellness Mobile Units [128](#)
Streetwise Partners [364](#)
Strive International [364](#)
StrongHearts Native Helpline [287](#)
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [155](#), [167](#)
Surveillance [180](#)
Surveillance Self-Defense [185](#)
Surveillance Technology Oversight Project [49](#), [185](#)
SWOP Behind Bars [44](#)
Sylvia Rivera Law Project [306](#)
Syringe Services [133](#), [168](#)

T

Tactical Tech [185](#)
TARA [150](#)
Tax Assistance [116](#), [120](#)
Tenant Resource Portal [103](#)

Therapy for Black Girls [153](#)
Therapy for Black Men [153](#)
Three-quarter Housing [90](#)
Thrive for Life Prison Project [44](#)
Transgender Law Center [307](#)
Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund [308](#)
Trans Lifeline [306](#)
Trauma-Informed Linkage to Care Clinic [126](#)
Trevor Project [327](#)
Tuberculosis Testing and Treatment [129](#)
Tuition Assistance Program [70](#)

U

Unclaimed Money (from the government) [108](#)
Unemployment [110](#), [421](#)
Union Settlement—Adult Education [60](#)
United Activities Unlimited (UAU)—Fatherhood Matters [338](#)
United Negro College Fund [72](#)
Unlock NYC [105](#)
Untapped Solutions [365](#)
UpTurn [184](#)
Urban Justice Center [109](#), [196](#)
Urban Pathways—Olivieri Center Drop-in Center [85](#)
Urban Upbound [119](#)
USA.gov—Consumer Issues [219](#)
US Citizenship and Immigration Services—Green Cards [243](#)
US Department of Education—Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) [70](#)
US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) [258](#)
US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) [203](#), [232](#)

V

Venture House [144](#)
Veterans Affairs (VA) [258](#)
Veterans Crisis Line [264](#)
VIP Community Services [163](#)
Visions [276](#)
Volunteers of Legal Service—Benefits Law Project [110](#)
Volunteers of Legal Service—Incarcerated Mothers Law Project [281](#)
Voter Suppression [210](#)

W

WebCrims [204](#)
WhatsOK [327](#)
Win NYC [286](#), [339](#)

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program [282](#)
Women's Prison Association [45, 95, 282](#)
Workers Defense League [364](#)
Workforce 1 (WF1) Career Centers [357](#)
Working Papers for Teens [327](#)
World Health Organization (WHO) [22](#)
Worth Rises [50](#)

Y

Youth Justice Network [321](#)
Youth Represent [322](#)

Notes

NOTES
442

Notes

Notes

2024 Calendar

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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