

The New York Public Library

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# Connections

2022 A free guide for formerly  
incarcerated people in  
New York City

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The New York Public Library

# Connections

**2022** A free guide for formerly incarcerated  
people in New York City

*Edited by*

Kate Heenan



New York  
Public  
**Library**

# Connections 2022

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 2022* is available as a PDF online at:

[nypl.org/jps](https://nypl.org/jps)



The New York Public Library, 2022.

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# About Connections

Every agency listed in *Connections* has been contacted in order to provide you with 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 2022 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Please be advised that the moment *Connections* is printed, it is out of date.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 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

We highly encourage everyone to contact organizations before visiting in person to confirm operating hours, services being provided (in-person or remote), and any mask or vaccination 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 agency 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](https://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 (ES) 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 (P) 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 2023 edition of *Connections*, by writing to:

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

## Acknowledgments

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We are proud to showcase the artwork of 16 currently and formerly incarcerated artists throughout this book. Our cover art was created by Pedro Cirilo. 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 the 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 location, 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](http://www.nypl.org).

**Brooklyn Public Library**  
Call **718.968.7275** or visit [www.bklynlibrary.org](http://www.bklynlibrary.org).

**Queens Public Library**  
Call **718.990.0700** or visit [www.queenslibrary.org](http://www.queenslibrary.org).

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# Profiles

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WORDS ARE TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. I TRY TO TAKE SERIOUSLY ACTS OF LANGUAGE. WORDS SET THINGS IN MOTION. I'VE SEEN THEM DOING IT. WORDS SET UP ATMOSPHERES, ELECTRICAL FIELDS, CHARGES. I'VE FELT THEM DOING IT. WORDS CONJURE. I TRY NOT TO BE CARELESS ABOUT WHAT I UTTER, WRITE, SING. I'M CAREFUL ABOUT WHAT I GIVE VOICE TO.

— TONI CADE BAMBARA

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## COLBY WILLIAMS

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WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.



I remember standing in the threshold on the day of my release waiting for the gate to open. The other side of the door seemed like the setting of a dream: I knew I had been there before but could not picture every detail in focus. The vision might end and become reality as soon as the door rolled back, but I expected to wake up before the dream reached a natural conclusion.

I passed through the gate, and after only five steps onto the pavement, the sunshine and street noise felt real again. The world behind me now felt like the dream. My parents picked me up and drove me to a halfway house—just like they had driven me to my childhood friends' homes hundreds of times before. We sat at a truck stop and ate fried chicken. We talked about the weather. What had seemed monumental in my imagination was suddenly mundane. This is how I would experience reentry for the rest of my life: caught between two worlds, feeling like they cannot both be real, living in one and daydreaming about the other.

As long as we allow prisons to separate individuals from families and communities, those attempting to cross the threshold between the inside and the outside will feel this tension. Every interaction seems crowded by some level of stigma. Every new

friend tries, but cannot quite understand, what goes through my mind when I remember where I have been. As long as a criminal record makes one weird, scary, or uninvited, those who carry them will never be fully whole. Reentry becomes a conversation about symptom management instead of healing.

Fortunately, people are increasingly ready to change the conversation. A spotlight shines on the tragedy of police violence and overincarceration, and now our families, neighborhoods, landlords, employers, schools, and services are warming up to the idea that experience within the criminal legal system can equip a person with value and not only shame. Formerly incarcerated students at CUNY School of Law are a prime example of this.

When I learned that law school was possible for me, a lot of things changed. I searched “law school with a criminal record” on a whim and found formerly incarcerated students and attorneys already studying or practicing law across the country. So, I picked up the phone. One call led me to a formerly incarcerated attorney who told me that law school at CUNY was one of the best times of his life. Another call led me to a student who had founded a club supporting justice-impacted students at CUNY Law. Months later, I sold everything I owned and moved to Brooklyn in order to get into the mix.

The students of FILSAA, the Formerly Incarcerated Law Students Advocacy Association, welcomed me with open hearts. They provided academic, social, and professional support and treated me like a lifelong friend right out of the gate. These are all things a traditional student might already know and all things that might cause a nontraditional student to fall through the cracks. We carry these practices on with each incoming class. I neglected asking for help in the beginning because that did not seem natural. It is not easy to trust nor to ask for help in prison or in many communities often touched by incarceration. But with other formerly incarcerated students to approach, it seemed like our shared experiences kept us from feeling so isolated. I always found the help I needed and never felt shame for needing it.

More than all of this, though, they showed me in so many undefinable ways that I no longer stood in the threshold. Experiences with

the criminal system taught me traits and skills that were valued in the world of FILSAA and of social justice lawyering. My new friends taught me that I brought something powerful to the practice of the law. I had not seen myself as valuable in a long time, and suddenly I began to believe it.

We continue this work at CUNY School of Law for more and more students each year. Prospective students with criminal records find us through our YouTube channel, where we try to answer the same questions I once had, years ago, in my vague search for what was possible. When we connect with prospective students, our members go to work answering questions and editing admissions essays. Once formerly incarcerated students arrive, we work hard to offer the same kinds of academic, professional, and social support I received, but we also seek opportunities to allow them to connect with the legal community beyond our campus. Recently, a few extremely generous attorneys from the Beit Simchat Torah congregation joined us in establishing a mentorship program for the formerly incarcerated students of FILSAA. Many of us are first-generation college students—almost certainly first-generation law students—and have no built-in professional networks in the legal world. Our mentors help us navigate that and other challenges that come as justice-impacted students trying to enter an historically elite profession. Looking beyond law school, we partner with organizations like the National Justice Impact Bar Association and the Unlock the Bar Coalition to advocate for attorneys with criminal records and reduce the discriminatory impact of out-of-date character and fitness questions on the state’s bar application. We also try to keep an open channel of communication with our school’s Admissions Department, helping them see the benefit of offering more seats to formerly incarcerated applicants, thereby opening up the legal field to those most affected by it.

For so long I imagined possibilities for my life after prison, and a very low ceiling limited my imagination. When I found out I could go to law school and join the fight for change, I began allowing myself to imagine a future with no ceiling, where anything might be possible. At FILSAA, we offer that hope to each next wave of students who are deserving of a future in which their pasts might fuel their abilities to create a more just world. These days, my imagination is bigger and brighter, and prison has never felt so far behind.

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## LISETTE BAMENGA

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WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.

As a woman who has been directly impacted by the legal system, it is very important to me to advocate for the sisters and brothers who are still inside. After spending 4 years on Rikers Island fighting my case, I went upstate to serve the remaining 2.5 years of my sentence. Prior to my incarceration, I had taught in NYC schools for close to a decade and had earned a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education, Childhood Education, and Students with Disabilities. As the time for my release neared, I wondered if I would find a place in society. Because of my conviction, my teaching license was revoked, so what would I do to support myself? Since I had a term of post-release supervision, I had to report to parole. During orientation, several organizations came to pitch their services. While making small talk with various providers, I was introduced to a whole network of people who cared about formerly incarcerated people. This is when I was introduced to the field of reentry. Organizations such as St Luke's Hospital's Coming Home program, which ensures people returning home from incarceration have access to good healthcare; College and Community Fellowship, which assists women with legal system involvement pursue their education; Women's Community Justice Association, who introduced me to advocacy, and several others. They showed

me that not only people in the community cared about the plight of individuals who are currently and formerly incarcerated, but people who directly had been impacted by the legal system were leading these organizations and programs. This realization gave me the reassurance I needed to trust I would find my rightful place in the community. Just three months after my release from prison, I started working as an Academic Coordinator for Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison, a non-profit organization that provides college programming for women and men who are incarcerated in NY state. In that role, I managed the college program in a women's correctional facility. I am a strong believer that education is power. Thus, this opportunity enabled me to marry my passion for pedagogy and my desire to make sure the sisters and brothers I had left behind received the best possible education.

After the onset of COVID-19 forced college providers out of the facility, I wanted to expand my impact by joining advocacy efforts but the thought of identifying myself as a formerly incarcerated person left me ashamed and petrified. The stigma of having been to prison caused me to want to hide behind the scenes. However, once I realized the value and power I possessed because of my lived experience, I signed up to be an advocate for criminal justice reforms every chance I got. My first public speaking engagement was in September 2020 during a NYS Senate Joint Committee Hearing about the impact of COVID-19 on jails and prisons. At that hearing, I testified on behalf of the New York Consortium of Higher Education in Prison, in front of legislators and community members, on the effects the pandemic had on academic programs. Shortly after the hearing, I was invited to be a panelist at a Restore the Vote Town Hall to share the many obstacles I encountered before I could vote in the 2020 Presidential election. This panel was attended by NYS Senators and Assembly Members who worked on bills S830B/A4448 to automatically re-enfranchise people returning home upon release from prison. After that event, I spoke at a Turn On the TAP Rally to discuss the benefits of higher education in prison, and to advocate for bills S4464/A2322 to be passed to restore state financial aid for incarcerated college students. I have also participated in Clean Slate Act advocacy days where I spoke to legislators about bills S1553A/A6399, which would automatically seal and expunge misdemeanor and felony

convictions after a certain period of time spent in the community; a prospect I expressed would provide formerly incarcerated people a true reintegration into society. I also wrote an article titled “Good Intentions Don’t Blunt the Impact of Dehumanizing Words” as part of the Marshall Project’s Language Project to raise awareness on the use of person-first language in the media. My article discussed the impact of the use of negative labels, and provided readers alternatives they can use when discussing people with legal system involvement in a way that respects their humanity. Needless to say I no longer wonder whether I have a place in the community. Just as the saying goes “the people closest to the problem are the closest to the solution”, I decided to partake in the improvements I wanted to see in society.

Believing that criminal justice reform is closely tied to racial justice, I am currently leading a project to design a curriculum on Racial Justice and Abolition Democracy at Columbia University. Educating the next generation as well as people in the community about the true history of this country, the racist practices embedded in every system, and pushing them to reimagine a just society is what I hope to accomplish with this curriculum. I believe that educators are the pillars of their community, therefore I intend to use my position of leadership to affect changes in areas traditionally overlooked with the goal of achieving greater equity and opportunities for all. My desire to use restorative justice practices to foster healing and trust in my community is charged by my drive to eradicate the roadblocks that have been kept in place by racist systemic policies. Subsequently, aside from thought provoking curriculum, I am also interested in working on educational policies and reforms to uproot the barriers that prevent marginalized people from climbing the social ladder. I believe now is the opportune time to take action because it seems the plight and cries of people of color are finally mobilizing change on a larger scale than ever before. With people being more attuned to the systemic inequalities, I find it imperative to use my lived experience and join in the advocacy efforts so I can be part of the changes I want to see.

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## ANGEL SOLIS

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WORDS AND IMAGE USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE WRITER.



While I cannot tell you the definite time or date of my rebirth, I can give you an approximation. I was socially put to death by the state of New York on my birthday, September 8th, 2011. I was sentenced to 5 ½ years. It was a slow death. Every social tie that connected me to the fabric of my human existence was painfully and gradually torn asunder by the closing steel bars of my incarceration. The final two blows came when my grandmother, the woman who had raised me single handedly, perished. When she died, all hopes of a shelter, a place to start anew, died with her. It dawned on me that I was going to be released to a shelter one day. Soon after her death, I lost contact with the mother of my then year-old daughter. I would not speak to my daughter again until I was released. That year was the worst year of my life. For the first time, I was utterly alone. I began losing my hair and I had lost the will to live but I was unable to die; hence, I existed but was not alive. I was somewhere in between, something akin to existence in a womb.

Like a child in a mother's womb, for the next year I floated aimlessly, nourished, sheltered, and restricted by the cold chains of my umbilical cord. I don't remember how or when, but I do remember

being made aware that I could get a couple of months taken off my sentence if I got a certain amount of college credits. Fortuitously, I happened to be in one of the very few prisons that had a college program. I was eligible because I had gotten my GED in Rikers Island during a previous prison sentence. At the time, I enrolled because I loved to read, and college meant more books. Indeed, reading and sleeping were my sole moments of respite from the unceasing agony of a confined existence. I had no inkling at that time, but I was mere weeks away from my rebirth.

In contemporary western civilization, most births occur in a hospital; however, my rebirth occurred in a makeshift Economics 101 classroom at Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility. The first time I began to utilize my hearing was when our professor began explaining how poverty and wealth, social and economic class, and even racial constructs were an epiphenomenon of a society's economic system. The first time I used my vocal cords I, like all newborns, cried out. Outraged at the blatant resultant injustices that were inherent in the operation of our economic system, I ranted to my professor about how the system must be changed. He looked at me with sad warm eyes and with a smile told me to read the textbook chapter on Karl Marx. I did and for the first time in my life I could see. Famished for more stimuli, my intellectual eyes would not be halted by some insignificant chapter break but would insatiably consume the entire textbook before the conclusion of that week. When I finally closed that textbook, I opened a new chapter in my life. I would take my first step on a path forged by an exigent desire to attain justice and equity.

I could never truly illustrate how painful my rebirth was. I still bear the markings of my birth within the deepest reaches of my psyche. I remember staying up writing an essay in Greene Correctional Facility as the screams of a fellow inmate being assaulted by correctional officers came in through my window. As if one of the sadistic Fates were illustrating a destiny yet to manifest, through tear-streaked eyes I saw shadows of fists falling unto the inmate, dancing wickedly to the song of his cry moving across on my paper. This shadow, reflected through the window of my cubicle, refracted that inmate's agony through the prism of my heart. His pain was my pain; his present my present; his future my future; his oppression my oppression. Most students experi-

ence college with extreme anxiety due to the volume of course work and mounting deadlines; while I did too, it was compounded with a more primal anxiety... one tied to survival. I saw people die in prison. I have seen officers laugh as they placed a rag over a kid's face and poured water over it. I lived in a state of incessant, all-encompassing fear of my newly acquired life the entire time of my incarceration. Paranoia, anxiety, hypervigilance, all these awareness states aided my survival in captivity. In freedom, these awareness states would insidiously threaten my mental health. It's a war I still wage internally, for a part of my mind still does not recognize that I am safe... Indeed, a part of me still isn't free.

I would eventually be released in April 2016. Having maintained a 4.0 GPA and accumulated 64 credits, professors I had met in prison persuaded me to apply to Columbia University. I was accepted and graduated with a bachelor's degree in May 2021. But reentry was and still is difficult and fraught with peril. I was released into a shelter by parole and had I not had the support of the friends I had accumulated during my time in prison I would have returned to prison or died. I was always hungry, broke, and dealing with the oppressive environment of my two jobs while simultaneously going to school. I was expected to survive off \$80 a month in food stamps and no matter what I did I could not make it work. However, with the aid of my friends, I persevered. In time these friends connected me to a network of like minded individuals who believed in the fight against injustice. These connections, these people, these gentle hands who sowed this torn thread back into the fabric of society helped me navigate institutional obstacles and recruited me into their ranks. Today I work at the Alliance of Families for Justice (AFJ) and lead their youth community leadership program, the Youth Empowerment Project. At AFJ we provide services for the families of the incarcerated and tirelessly endeavor to eradicate the injustices that proliferate in prisons. Some may say I have successfully reentered society, but the reentry phase has never ended for me. Ultimately, being cut off from people almost killed me. It was people that breathed life into my moving corpse, and it is people that keep me going; hence, I live my life in dedication to people and their access to justice.

# COVID-19

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HUMAN? HOW DO WE WALK THE EARTH, HOW DO WE WALK IT AND HOW DO WE TALK IT, WITH GENUINE SYMPATHY?

— SONIA SANCHEZ



ARTWORK BY BOBBY JOHNSON

USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

# Introduction

Please be advised that the moment *Connections* is printed, it is out of date. This is especially true due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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

The impact of COVID-19 will continue to be felt in unpredictable ways. This impacts the organizations in *Connections* and the services they are able to provide.

It is important to be aware of government policy changes that may be made as the situation is monitored and evaluated. For the most recent information and updates on COVID-19, including latest data and COVID-19 cases by area, variant information, vaccines, vaccination sites, testing sites, symptoms, prevention, mask guidelines, and more, contact:

For **New York State**—Call the **COVID-19 Hotline: 888.346.3065**, call the **Vaccination Hotline: 833.697.4829**, or visit [www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home](http://www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home).

For **New York City**—Call **311**, text **COVID** to **692-692**, or visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page](http://www1.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](http://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019). The website also 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.

New York State's COVID-19 website is [www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home](http://www.coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home). Updated information on symptoms and prevention, testing, vaccines, rights, news, including travel advisories, and more, is available.

New York City's COVID-19 website is [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-main.page). Updated information on vaccines, new variants/strains, face covering guidance, symptoms, higher risk factors, symptoms in children, information for those who are pregnant, and more, is available.

Anyone can get COVID-19 and spread COVID-19. The best way to protect yourself and others is to get vaccinated 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. While vaccinated people can get breakthrough cases and spread COVID-19, it is significantly less likely compared to unvaccinated people. Scientists and doctors are still learning about COVID-19, including information about long-term effects it can have.

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

- Get a vaccine, if you are medically able to do so.
- Wear a face mask.
- Practice physical distancing as much as possible.
- 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.

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 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.

For more information about face masks, including COVID-19 facts, care instructions, and frequently asked questions, visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/resources/facecoverings.page](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/resources/facecoverings.page).

## 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. How often you should get tested depends on whether or not you are vaccinated against COVID-19. People who are not fully vaccinated should get tested more often, even if they do not have symptoms or a recent exposure.

At the time of publication, if you go to a test site run by New York State or NYC Test and Trace Corps there is never any charge for your test. For test sites operated by private companies including pharmacies, medical practices, or not-for-profit organizations,

you are advised to 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.

For more information about COVID-19 testing, including drive-thru testing, antibody testing, and to find a testing site:

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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/coronavirus/get-tested/covid-19-testing.page).

**At-home testing for COVID-19** is available to all immunocompromised New Yorkers and those ages 65 and older. To schedule an in-home appointment, call **929.298.9400** between 9am–7pm, 7 days a week.

## Post COVID-19 Care & Long COVID

The long-term effects of those who have had 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 have needed hospitalization or not, continue to experience health issues for months 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.

COVID-19

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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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-symptoms-chronic-health-risks.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-symptoms-chronic-health-risks.page) for a list of Post-COVID care clinics.

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](http://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 related to COVID-19, call the **Legal Aid Society’s Access to Benefits (A2B) Helpline** at **888.663.6880**, Mon–Fri 10am–3pm.

### **BODY POLITIC—COVID-19 SUPPORT GROUP**

[www.wearebodypolitic.com](http://www.wearebodypolitic.com)

A support group 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.

## **Vaccines**

According to medical experts, the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 is by getting a vaccine. It is possible to get COVID-19 a second time, 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.

As of October 2021, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized three COVID-19 vaccines: Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson (J&J). See the table on the next page for more information about each vaccine. Information about additional doses and booster shots is available on [page 28](#).

Name	Who Can Get this Vaccine	How Many Initial Shots Needed	When Are You Fully Vaccinated?
Pfizer	People 5 years and older*	2 shots, given 3 weeks (21 days) apart	2 weeks after your second shot
Moderna	People 18 years and older	2 shots, given 4 weeks (28 days) apart	2 weeks after your second shot
J&J	People 18 years and older	1 shot	2 weeks after your shot

*\* At the time of publication, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized Pfizer for children ages 5 to 11 years old. The dose contains one-third the amount of active ingredient compared to the adult dose, and children would receive a second dose 21 days or more after their first shot.*

Vaccines are made up of ingredients including small amounts of inactive ingredients such as oil, salt, sugar, and an active ingredient. The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines use messenger RNA (mRNA). Although the COVID-19 vaccine was developed recently, research on mRNA vaccines has been under way for decades. The mRNA vaccines do not contain any live virus. Instead, they work by teaching your body how to make the protein that triggers antibody production so if the real virus enters your body, your immune system will recognize it, and antibodies will be produced to get rid of it. The J&J vaccine uses a cold virus to carry a ‘spike’ gene into the body, where cells make safe copies of the protein to prime the immune system in case the real virus enters the body. None of the vaccines change your DNA.

More resources worldwide were invested in creating the COVID-19 vaccine than in any other medicine in history. The record pace of production of the vaccines is due to increased resources, the mRNA vaccine method, and a vaccine blueprint from another similar virus called MERS. All phases of clinical trials were completed showing the vaccine was safe and effective before they were approved.

People often have side effects after getting the vaccine, usually lasting a day or two. This is normal and a sign that your immune

system is being activated to fight the virus and can include pain, redness, or swelling where the shot was given, fever, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills, and joint pain. Severe allergic reactions to the vaccine are rare. Be sure to tell the person giving you the shot if you have a history of severe allergic reactions or if you've ever had to use an EpiPen.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines visit [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html).

The **Justice Initiatives** team at **Brooklyn Public Library** have published a COVID-19 information packet written and researched by **The Community**, a Milwaukee, Wisconsin based decarceration organization and newsletter, who partnered with the Medical College of Wisconsin, and students and staff at Yale University. When making the packet they asked incarcerated ambassadors what questions/concerns they were hearing inside, and let that guide them in what to cover. To receive a packet by mail, please write to:

**Justice Initiatives**  
**Brooklyn Public Library**  
**240 Division Avenue at Marcy Avenue**  
**Brooklyn, NY 11211**

## Schedule a Vaccine Appointment

For information about COVID-19 vaccines, including locations and making an appointment:

For **New York State**—Call **888.346.3065** or visit [www.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov](http://www.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov).

For **New York City**—Call **311** or visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines.page).

## COVID-19 Vaccine at Home

NYC is offering in-home COVID-19 vaccinations. You can sign up for in-home vaccination at <https://forms.cityofnewyork.us/f/home> (not accessible on Internet Explorer) or by calling **877.829.4692**. You will then be contacted to schedule your in-home vaccination. You can choose to receive the two-dose Pfizer or Moderna vaccine,

or the one-dose J&J vaccine. Multiple people in the same household can be vaccinated during a single visit.

### **Free Transportation**

NYC residents 65 and older can get free transportation to and from a vaccination appointment. This service is also available for those with disabilities who have no other way to get to a vaccination site. To schedule free transport by either ambulette or taxi (including wheelchair accessible vehicles), call **877.829.4692**. People younger than 18 must have a parent or guardian call to book the trip on their behalf.

### **DISABILITY INFORMATION AND ACCESS LINE (DIAL)**

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

[www.acl.gov/DIAL](http://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.

### **Additional Doses & Booster Shots**

People who are moderately to severely immunocompromised (meaning they have a weakened immune system) are eligible for an additional dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. The CDC recommends the additional dose at least 28 days after a second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. Immunocompromised individuals should confer with their physicians regarding the appropriateness and timing for receiving an additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

There are booster recommendations for all three COVID-19 vaccines available in the US for people over 18. For up-to-date information about booster shots and eligibility visit <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/booster-doses>. Booster shots are available for:

- People who received the J&J vaccine 2 or more months ago
- People who received the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine at least 6 months ago

- “Mix and matching” of vaccine brands is permitted

It is recommended to consult your regular health care provider for more information.

## Vaccine Card Information

After receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, people are given a vaccination card. The card includes 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. It is important to keep your vaccination card in a safe place, as it will be needed for travel purposes, to enter certain businesses, attend events, and for additional doses or booster shots.

Do not laminate your card as vaccine providers will not be able to write additional information on it, such as booster shot information.

If you have lost your vaccination card, call the **NYS COVID-19 Vaccination Hotline** at **833.697.4829** for information on how to get a replacement card.

The NYC Health website has information on lost vaccination cards for those who need verification of their vaccine status, available at [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/cir-parents-guardians.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/cir-parents-guardians.page).

## Resources & Organizations

The following are resources related specifically to COVID-19. This is not a comprehensive list. Many of the organizations in *Connections* are also providing COVID-19 specific services or have a dedicated COVID-19 resource page on their website.

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### FINANCIAL HELP & RELIEF

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Due to the pandemic, temporary financial relief programs were set up to help people with economic hardship. At the time of publication, these relief funds may have run out or are on pause. This includes the **Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)**, the

**Excluded Workers Fund**, and the **Emergency Broadband Benefit**. It is important to stay up to date for any developments. More information about ERAP can be found on [page 34](#).

### **EXCLUDED WORKERS FUND**

[www.dol.ny.gov/EWF](http://www.dol.ny.gov/EWF)

The program set up to provide financial help to New Yorkers who lost income during the COVID-19 pandemic and were left out of various federal relief programs, including unemployment and pandemic benefits. At the time of publication, applications were no longer being accepted.

### **FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION—EMERGENCY BROADBAND BENEFIT**

Telephone: **833.511.0311**

[www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit](http://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit)

Temporary program to help families and households struggling to afford internet service during the COVID-19 pandemic. Provides a discount of up to \$50 per month toward broadband service for eligible households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers. Call or visit the website for eligibility and application information.

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## **MENTAL HEALTH**

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**NYS COVID-19 Emotional Support Helpline**—Call **844.863.9314** (7 days a week, 8am–10pm).

**NYC Well**—Call **888.692.9355** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Interpreters are available for over 200 languages. Can provide referrals for those experiencing grief and loss.

### **NYC HEALTH—COVID-19**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-mental-health.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-mental-health.page)

Provides information and resources for coping and emotional well-being related to COVID-19 including stress, anxiety, grief, and trauma.

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## SUPPORT IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE

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Organizations that can provide resources for safety and offer support can be found within various chapters in this book for those experiencing violence at home. Look up Domestic Violence in the back index to find page numbers for these listings.

**Futures Without Violence** offers a list of resources available at [www.futureswithoutviolence.org/get-updates-information-covid-19](http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/get-updates-information-covid-19).

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## COVID-19 & HUMAN RIGHTS

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NYC Human Resources Attorneys and human rights specialists are available to help those who have experienced discrimination or harassment related to COVID-19. Visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/media/covid19.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/media/covid19.page) for information on rights. To report harassment or discrimination in housing, at work, or in any public place, call **212.416.0197**, or use the online form at [www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page).

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## NYC ISOLATION HOTEL PROGRAM FOR THOSE WITH COVID-19

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**Telephone: 844.692.4692 (9am—9pm) or 311**  
[www1.nyc.gov/site/helpnownyc/get-help/covid-19-hotel-program.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/helpnownyc/get-help/covid-19-hotel-program.page)

Provides hotel rooms for self-isolation, free of charge, for up to 14 days for those who do not have a safe place to self-isolate. This can mean (1) your home does not have space for you to stay six feet away from others, (2) you share rooms or a bathroom, or (3) you live with someone who is vulnerable. Hotel rooms are also available for New Yorkers without COVID-19 but who live with someone who has COVID-19. To qualify, a medical provider will assess your situation and then refer you to a hotel if appropriate. The program includes food, linens, and local phone service.

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## GET FOOD NYC—COVID-19 EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

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[www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/contact/services/COVID-19FoodAssistance.shtml](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/contact/services/COVID-19FoodAssistance.shtml)

Provides information on food resources across the city including free food pantries and grab-and-go meals at NYC Schools, available for all children or adults in need; grocery store and farmer's market locations; information on P-EBT; NYC food delivery assistance; benefit information; and other services and information.

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## NYC HEAT AND UTILITIES BILL ASSISTANCE

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<https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-02529>

Provides updates about heat and utilities bills and information on emergency financial assistance, the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), and more.

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## SERVICE PROGRAM FOR OLDER PEOPLE (SPOP)

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Telephone: 212.787.7120 x514

[www.spop.org](http://www.spop.org)

Providing comprehensive behavioral healthcare for New Yorkers ages 55 and over and offering bereavement support groups for adults of all ages, free of charge during the COVID-19 pandemic. Call or visit the website for more information.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORK PROTECTION (DCWP)—WORKER RIGHTS

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Worker Protection Hotline: 212.436.0381 or 311

[www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/workers/worker-rights.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/workers/worker-rights.page)

Provides information about reopening and health and safety

guidelines for the workplace. Call to report an employer that is not following safety requirements.

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## MUTUAL AID NYC

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**Hotline: 646.437.8080**

[www.mutualaid.nyc](http://www.mutualaid.nyc)

A network of groups organizing to provide aid and support to New Yorkers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Contact to find information on groups by neighborhood and resources for specific needs. The website also provides a substantial resource library covering many topics including childcare, delivery/transport, education, eldercare, exercise and wellness, food, fun and leisure, housing, internet and technology, jobs, legal, medical, mental health, money, mutual aid organizing, personal protective equipment (PPE), petcare, safety from violence, social service guidance, and more. A directory to search for support offered by location and a help request form is available online. Visit the website for the hotline operating hours and languages offered.

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## NYC COVID CARE NETWORK

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[www.nyccovidcare.org](http://www.nyccovidcare.org)

A mutual aid network comprised of therapists, psychiatrists, counselors, life coaches, grief counselors, spiritual care providers, organizers, and crisis line workers. Provides support to all essential workers and their families, and any uninsured individual in the NYC Metro area. Visit the website to connect to services.

# Rent & Eviction Information

**It is important to stay up to date with policies and legal processes for tenants throughout 2022 to know what protections you may have.** Organizations and resources offering free legal assistance,

eviction defense, and more can be found in the *Housing* chapter starting on [page 105](#).

The **Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)** was the rent relief program set in place to pay COVID-19-related debts to prevent evictions. As of November 2021, the total requests for assistance exceeded available federal funding for ERAP and the application portal has been closed.

ERAP applications under review or submitted prior to the portal closing will be reviewed for eligibility and payment depending on available federal funds. To fill out an online form to be notified of possible future opportunities to apply to ERAP, visit the **NYS ERAP** webpage at [www.otda.ny.gov/erap](http://www.otda.ny.gov/erap).

People who need assistance can apply for Cash Assistance, including an emergency assistance grant (one-shot deal), through ACCESS HRA. People who applied for ERAP before the application portal closed need to submit proof of their ERAP application and/or determination with their HRA application for rental assistance in accordance with NYS requirements. For up-to-date information on NYC Rental Assistance visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/new-york-emergency-rental-assistance-program-erap.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/new-york-emergency-rental-assistance-program-erap.page).

At the time of publication, there was no comprehensive eviction moratorium to protect all tenants in NY from evictions and the eviction protections put in place are set to expire January 15, 2022. An eviction moratorium prohibits tenants from being physically evicted from their homes, but does not cancel rent—meaning landlords still have the right to collect unpaid rent that has accrued.

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. If you receive an eviction notice from the Court, call **718.557.1379** for information about how to access free legal assistance. Free interpretation services are available.

Free legal advice and representation for NYC residents, regardless of immigration status, is being offered by NYC HRA's Office of Civil

Justice. Call **311** and ask for the “**Tenant Helpline**” for updates and assistance with legal issues related to housing including tenancy, eviction, landlord-tenant disputes, and more.

The **NYC Tenant Resource Portal**, available at [www1.nyc.gov/content/tenantresourceportal/pages/](http://www1.nyc.gov/content/tenantresourceportal/pages/), is an online tool to help renters navigate public and private resources. A tenant seeking help is taken through a series of questions and directed to resources based on their responses.

For information and updates on **NYC Rental Assistance Programs**, including eligibility and information for an emergency cash grant for rent arrears, visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/rental-assistance.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/rental-assistance.page) or call the **NYC HRA Infoline** at **718.557.1399**.

**NYC Mayor’s Office to Protect Tenants** provides up-to-date information on eviction, including your rights and legal implications, online at [www1.nyc.gov/content/tenantprotection/pages/covid19-home-quarantine](http://www1.nyc.gov/content/tenantprotection/pages/covid19-home-quarantine).

**Right to Counsel NYC Coalition** provides up-to-date information including fact sheets and a Know Your Rights guide explaining the limited eviction moratorium, pre-COVID-19 cases, and court openings, online at [www.righttocounselnyc.org/organizing\\_covid19](http://www.righttocounselnyc.org/organizing_covid19).

The **New York State Unified Court System** provides housing court updates and information on housing related legal actions. Call **212.962.4795** or visit [www.nycourts.gov/courts/nyc/housing/index.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/nyc/housing/index.shtml).

For information and updates on COVID-19 guidance and resources for **NYCHA residents** visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/covid-19-resources.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/covid-19-resources.page).

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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/rentfreeze/index.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/rentfreeze/index.page).

# Other Information & Resources

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## ECONOMIC INCOME PAYMENTS (STIMULUS CHECKS)

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At the time of publication, there have been a total of three Economic Income Payments (EIP):

- \$1,200 in April 2020
- \$600 in December 2020/January 2021
- \$1,400 in March 2021

Eligible people who didn't receive the first two stimulus checks, or who received less than they should have, could have claimed a Recovery Rebate Credit on their 2020 tax returns. People who didn't receive the third stimulus payment can submit a Recovery Rebate Credit on their 2021 returns. For more information including eligibility, payment amounts, documents needed, and payment timing visit [www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment](http://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/get-my-payment).

### 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](http://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 the IRS actions or inactions should use Form 911, available to download at [www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/contact-us/submit-a-request-for-assistance](http://www.taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/contact-us/submit-a-request-for-assistance).

The IRS's **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](http://www.irs.gov/individuals/free-tax-return-preparation-for-qualifying-taxpayers).

The address for people in NY to file a federal tax return is:

Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service  
Kansas City, MO 64999

The IRS is not responsive to questions by mail.

New York City public libraries provide referrals to free tax help. See the listing for The New York Public Library on [page 119](#).

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## VISITING A LOVED ONE WHO IS CURRENTLY INCARCERATED

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For updates and guidelines for in-person visitation in **NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (NYS DOCCS)** facilities, visit [www.doccs.ny.gov/visitors](http://www.doccs.ny.gov/visitors) and [www.doccs.ny.gov/doccs-covid-19-report](http://www.doccs.ny.gov/doccs-covid-19-report).

For updates and guidelines for in-person visitation in **NYC Department of Correction (NYC DOC)** facilities, visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/doc/inmate-info/In-PersonVisits.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doc/inmate-info/In-PersonVisits.page).

Due to COVID-19, in-person visits at NYC DOC facilities are still limited and can be scheduled in advance online. Televisits, which can be done using any electronic device with a camera, an internet connection, and an active email account, are still being offered as an alternative. Televisits impact visitor privacy and **all family visits are recorded**. For more information see [page 176](#).

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## **NYC COURT INFORMATION & UPDATES**

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Call the **Coronavirus Hotline: 833.503.0447** or visit [www.nycourts.gov](http://www.nycourts.gov) for the most updated information about court openings and upcoming court dates for individuals.

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## **NYC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE**

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For updates and information on how to apply for Unemployment Insurance call **888.209.8124** Mon–Fri 8am–7:30pm or visit [www.ny.gov/services/get-unemployment-assistance](http://www.ny.gov/services/get-unemployment-assistance).

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## **CHILDCARE**

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For more information on child care options call **311** or visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/child-care.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/child-care.page).

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## **NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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For information and COVID-19 updates, including school building closures and reopenings, technical support for families, and more, visit [www.schools.nyc.gov](http://www.schools.nyc.gov). The Daily COVID Case Map shows all known active interventions and cases of COVID-19, and is updated Sun–Fri at 6pm.

Please note: if your child attends a private, faith-based, or charter school, you need to check with the school directly.

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## SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS IN NYC

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For updated information and resources visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/businesses/covid19-business-outreach.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/businesses/covid19-business-outreach.page).

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## BURIAL ASSISTANCE

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For eligibility and more information on burial assistance and financial help for COVID-19 related funeral expenses, including information about the NYC COVID-19 Immigrant Burial Assistance Program and the FEMA Burial Services Program visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/burial-assistance.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/burial-assistance.page).

# Formerly Incarcerated People

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IT'S AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK BUT IT'S ONE COMPLETELY  
WORTHY OF YOU.

— JOY JAMES



ARTWORK BY LAMARR LITTLE

USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

# Resources Similar to Connections

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

## ***Capital Regions Connections***

(Covers Albany, Schenectady, and Rensselaer)

The Center for Law and Justice

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

[www.cflj.org/resources-and-publications/connections](http://www.cflj.org/resources-and-publications/connections)

## ***Finding Your Way: A Resource Guide for Ex-Offenders Returning to Cayuga, Cortland, Seneca, Tioga, and Tompkins Counties***

Finger Lakes Library System–Outreach Department

1300 Dryden Road, Ithaca, NY 14850

English and Spanish Version: [www.flls.org/outreach/#reentry](http://www.flls.org/outreach/#reentry)

## ***North Country Resource***

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

Online only at: [www.northcountryresource.org](http://www.northcountryresource.org)

## ***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

[www.cefls.org/stafftrustees/services/outreach](http://www.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](http://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***

Mid-Hudson Library System–Outreach Department

103 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

[www.midhudson.org/hvconnections](http://www.midhudson.org/hvconnections)

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

Pioneer Library System

2557 State Route 21, Canandaigua, NY 14424

Telephone: 585.394.8260

[www.pls-net.org/services/outreach](http://www.pls-net.org/services/outreach)***Making Moves: A Listing of Transitional Services in the Rochester, NY and Monroe County Area***

Rochester Public Library–Outreach

115 South Avenue, Rochester, NY 14604

[www.roccitylibrary.org/services/outreach/making-moves](http://www.roccitylibrary.org/services/outreach/making-moves)***Suffolk County Resource Guide***

Suffolk County Reentry Task Force

C/O Probation Department

PO Box 205, Yaphank, NY 11980

[www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/CJCC/Suffolk-County-Reentry-Task-Force/Resources](http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/CJCC/Suffolk-County-Reentry-Task-Force/Resources)***Coming Back to Ulster County***

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills

320 Sawkill Road, Kingston, NY 12401

Telephone: 845.331.2884

[www.uucatskills.org/social-justice](http://www.uucatskills.org/social-justice)***Westchester Connections***

Westchester Library System–Reentry Services

570 Taxter Road, Elmsford, NY 10523

<https://connections.westchesterlibraries.org/reentry-task-force-resource-guide>

## Reentry Task Force by NYS County

**ALBANY COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Department of Mental Health

175 Green Street, Albany, NY 12202

Telephone: 518.447.2003

**BRONX COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Fortune Society at the Abraham House  
340 Willis Avenue, Bronx, NY 10454  
Telephone: 718.662.6166

**BROOME COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Department of Mental Health  
36-42 Main Street, Binghamton, NY 13901  
Telephone: 607.778.1364

**DUTCHESS COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

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

**ERIE COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

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

**KINGS COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O District Attorney's Office  
210 Joralemon Street, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201  
Telephone: 718.250.4374

**MONROE COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Delphi Rise  
835 West Main Street, Rochester, NY 14611  
Telephone: 585.467.2230

**NASSAU COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Probation Department  
60 Charles Lindbergh Blvd., Uniondale, NY 11553  
Telephone: 516.227.7025

**NEW YORK COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

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

**NIAGARA COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Community Missions  
1570 Buffalo Avenue, Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Telephone: 716.285.3403 x2258

**ONEIDA COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Workforce Investment Board  
209 Elizabeth Street, Utica, NY 13501  
Telephone: 315.798.3644

**ONONDAGA COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O District Attorney's Office  
421 Montgomery Street, 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: 347.510.3686

**RENSSELAER 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  
873 Route 45, Suite 108, New City, NY 10956  
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 x22

**SUFFOLK COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Probation Department  
PO Box 205, Yaphank, NY 11980  
Telephone: 631.852.5404

**ULSTER COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O Family of Woodstock, Inc.  
39 John Street, PO Box 3516, Kingston, NY 12402  
Telephone: 845.331.7080

**WESTCHESTER COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE**

C/O District Attorney’s Office  
111 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., White Plains, NY 10601  
Telephone: 914.995.2791

# Organizations

For programs specialized to serve youth, please see the *Youth* chapter starting on [page 295](#).

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**AFTER INNOCENCE** 

**Telephone: 415.307.3386**  
[www.after-innocence.org](http://www.after-innocence.org)

Provides reentry assistance to formerly incarcerated people who have been exonerated after serving time for crimes they did not commit. Services are provided via video or over the phone and include help with accessing healthcare, social services, public benefits, and legal services.

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**ALLIANCE OF FAMILIES FOR JUSTICE (AFJ)**  

**8 West 126th Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10027**  
**Telephone: 347.973.0580**  
[www.afj-ny.org](http://www.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 a 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 aimed at training future community leaders and provides monthly healing circles for formerly incarcerated individuals.

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## **BOWERY RESIDENTS' COMMITTEE (BRC)**

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**131 West 25th Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10001**  
**Telephone: 212.803.5700**  
[www.brc.org](http://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 community activities.

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## **BROOKLYN DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE—RE-ENTRY BUREAU**

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**210 Joralemon Street, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201**  
**Telephone: 718.250.3281**  
[www.brooklynnda.org](http://www.brooklynnda.org)

Provides reentry services and programs for those who have been released from a NYS facility. Programs include the Kings County Re-entry Task Force (KCRTF), Community & Law Enforcement Resources Together (ComALERT), and the Gender-responsive Re-entry and Support Program (GRASP). These programs provide connections to services including substance use disorder treatment, anger management, job-readiness workshops, high school equivalency degree classes, family services and mentor matching, life skills workshops, HIV/AIDS counseling and testing, health-insurance enrollment, clothing assistance, and more.

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**CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING AND  
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (CASES)**



[www.cases.org](http://www.cases.org)

**Nathaniel Clinic**

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

**Telephone: 212.553.6708**

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

**Telephone: 212.553.6300**

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. Program offices are in Central Harlem, Downtown Brooklyn, Jamaica, and the South Bronx. There is a community mental health clinic in Central Harlem. Remote services, including telehealth, available.

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**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES (CCA)**



**25 Chapel Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201**

**Telephone: 718.858.9658**

[www.communityalternatives.org](http://www.communityalternatives.org)

Promotes reintegrative justice and community-based alternative-to-incarceration programs. Services include job-readiness and retention assistance, peer and community support, and advocacy to assist negotiating with service agencies, including the child welfare system. Participants must have a case in the criminal court system or be on parole/probation and have a history of substance use disorder.

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**CENTER FOR COURT INNOVATION**



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

**Telephone: 646.386.3100**

[www.courtinnovation.org](http://www.courtinnovation.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 and enrollment requirements.

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## CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (CEO)

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**50 Broadway, Suite 1604, New York, NY 10004**

**Telephone: 212.422.4430**

[www.ceoworks.org](http://www.ceoworks.org)

Provides employment and training programs to individuals with criminal convictions and young adults ages 18–24. Services include resume help, job-search support, and tips on how to navigate a job interview under NYC’s Fair Chance Act. Pre-employment training includes obtaining OSHA, forklift, scaffolding, flagger, and carpentry certifications, and more. 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 POs if applicable. Email [referralsnyc@ceoworks.org](mailto:referralsnyc@ceoworks.org) for more information.

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## CIRCLES OF SUPPORT

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

**Telephone: 646.296.5319**

[www.circlesofsupport.org](http://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 training program for formerly incarcerated individu-

als; 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.

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## **CMO NETWORK**

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**653 Schenck Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11207**

[www.cmo-network.org](http://www.cmo-network.org)

Provides reintegration support services including group support meetings in anger management, substance use disorder prevention, employment readiness, legal empowerment, money management, and assistance with housing, education, benefits, and parole mediation. Offers help with cleaning up rap sheets and obtaining certificates.

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## **COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY—CENTER FOR JUSTICE—JUSTICE THROUGH CODE**

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

[www.centerforjustice.columbia.edu/justicethroughcode](http://www.centerforjustice.columbia.edu/justicethroughcode)

A free semester-long coding course for formerly incarcerated 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. Applicants are also eligible for free access to classes on Coursera's online learning platform. Visit the website for more information and application forms.

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## 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 120](#).

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## 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 336](#).

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## DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE—THE LAZARUS, DOUGLASS, TUBMAN COMMUNITY

**415 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217**

**Telephone: 718.797.2184**

[www.thedbna.org](http://www.thedbna.org)

Provides support services to currently and formerly incarcerated people, and their families. Services include help with repairing one's rap sheet, holiday gifts for children of incarcerated parents, recovery coaching, voter registration, and referrals to other agencies.

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## DRIVE CHANGE

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

See the full listing for Drive Change on [page 337](#).

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## EXODUS TRANSITIONAL COMMUNITY



2268 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 917.492.0990

[www.etcny.org](http://www.etcny.org)

Provides assistance with employment readiness and placement, paid transitional employment, housing, food, hygiene items, clothing, emergency assistance and support, transportation, help obtaining ID, High School Equivalency (HSE) and vocational training, anger management and other cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) groups, alternative-to-incarceration, substance use and mental health treatment, one-on-one and group therapy, and medical care. Services are delivered in English and Spanish. Offices also located in Newburgh and Poughkeepsie. Contact for operating hours and locations.

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## EXPONENTS



17 Battery Place, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 212.243.3434 / Crisis Intervention: 917.681.8531

[www.exponents.org](http://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. Call to schedule an appointment.

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## THE FOCUS FORWARD PROJECT



PO Box 2892, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008

Telephone: 347.619.2080

[www.focusforwardproject.org](http://www.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, interviews, conflict resolution, public speaking, and more. Participants also create reentry plans. Classes are available to those incarcerated at the MCC-New York or MDC-Brooklyn federal jails, and to those on federal pretrial supervised release. Contact to learn more and to sign up for classes.

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

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**114 West 116th Street, New York, NY 10026**  
**Telephone: 212.865.0960 or 212.865.0904**  
[www.facesny.org](http://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, food pantry, a clothes bank, and enrollment assistance for health insurance and SNAP benefits.

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**THE FORTUNE SOCIETY**   

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**29-76 Northern Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101**  
**Telephone: 212.691.7554**  
[www.fortunesociety.org](http://www.fortunesociety.org)

Offers a range of services and support for individuals ages 16 and over who have had involvement with the criminal legal system. Provides assistance with benefits enrollment, case management, housing, and education, as well as employment services, outpatient substance use treatment, outpatient mental health services,

family services, creative arts programs, food and nutrition programming, HIV/AIDS services, and alternative-to-incarceration programs. Discharge planning services are available for those at Rikers Island, as well as outreach activities in NYS DOCCS facilities. No legal services are offered.

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## GETTING OUT AND STAYING OUT (GOSO)



A reentry program for men 16–24 years old.

See the full listing for GOSO on [page 302](#).

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## HOUSING WORKS COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE—RE-ENTRY PROGRAM



301 West 37th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.465.8304 x4835

<https://healthcare.housingworks.org>

Assists people who are preparing for release from incarceration, or who have been incarcerated in the last five years, who are returning back to their NYC communities. Connects 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.

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## JUSTLEADERSHIP USA



PO Box 1730, New York, NY 10037

Telephone: 347.454.2195

[www.jlusa.org](http://www.jlusa.org)

Provides capacity building, advocacy, and leadership development trainings for individuals impacted by the criminal legal 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 (at least one year from release of previous incarceration) with less leadership experience, who are committed to protecting marginalized and underinvested people and communities.

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**NETWORK SUPPORT SERVICES, INC.**   

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**555 Bergen Avenue, 3rd Floor, Bronx, NY 10455**

**Telephone: 347.584.8601**

[www.networkssi.org](http://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.

FORMERLY INCARCERATED PEOPLE

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

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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.

Project Restore provides free representation to individuals with conviction records who have been denied vocational licenses and who are challenging the denial. Advocacy includes represent-

ing license seekers in administrative law proceedings, appealing adverse Administrative Law Judge decisions to agency commissioners, and, when warranted, appealing commissioners' decisions to the NYS Supreme Court via Article 78 Petitions.

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

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**OSBORNE ASSOCIATION**  

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**NYC Reentry Hotline: 833.672.3733 (every day 8am–8pm)**  
[www.osborneny.org](http://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. Offering workforce and employment services, substance use treatment services (El Rio), young adult services, court advocacy services, support for families impacted by incarceration, 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, entitlements, and COVID-19 specific concerns; providing full reentry services including pre-release discharge planning, reentry case management, direct virtual group and individual services.

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**QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—PRISON, JAILS, AND REENTRY OUTREACH** 

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**89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432**

**Telephone: 718.990.0894**

[www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/community-outreach/correctional-outreach](http://www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/community-outreach/correctional-outreach)

Provides information and connections to resources for people impacted by the criminal legal system. People on parole may be eligible for the Immediate Access: Technology Reentry program. The program, in partnership with Queens Defenders, provides technology equipment and assistance, 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 DOC custody programming and Ask-a-Librarian reference service through Library Hub on DOC-issued tablets. Visit the website or email [reentry@queenslibrary.org](mailto:reentry@queenslibrary.org) for more information on programs and services.

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## REFOUNDRY

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**63 Flushing Avenue, Building 212, Suite 207, Brooklyn, NY 11205**

**Telephone: 347.566.8562**

[www.refoundry.org](http://www.refoundry.org)

Provides training in repurposing discarded material into home furnishings and craft goods along with professional and business mentorship to formerly incarcerated people. The curriculum includes mental health and substance use disorder referrals; classes in using the internet, finance, business, and professional development; apprenticeships; business coaching; and more.

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## THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH—PRISON MINISTRY



**490 Riverside Drive, New York, NY, 10027**

**Social Justice Office: 212.870.6700**

[www.trcnyc.org/ministries/prisonministry](http://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 correspondence

with people currently incarcerated, holiday gift collections for the children of people currently incarcerated, and more. Contact for more information and meeting dates.

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**SWOP BEHIND BARS (SWBB)** 

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**Support Line: 877.776.2004 x212**

[www.swopbehindbars.org](http://www.swopbehindbars.org)

Provides resources and services to sex workers impacted by the carceral system. Members can be matched up with pen pals, create an Amazon wishlist, receive a reentry guide six months before release, hygiene kits and smartphones upon release, and other services. Those who have been released or are facing jail time are offered assistance with public defense, expunging of charges, and other advocacy and legal help.

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**THRIVE FOR LIFE PRISON PROJECT**  

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**30 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011**

**Telephone: 212.337.7544**

[www.thriveforlife.org](http://www.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.

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**WOMEN'S PRISON ASSOCIATION (WPA)**  

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**100 Pennsylvania Avenue, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11207**

**Telephone: 646.292.7740**

[www.wpaonline.org](http://www.wpaonline.org)

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

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

## Advocacy, Organizing, & News Resources

The following section includes advocacy, organizing, and news resources. The resources and organizations included do not provide direct services or programming. Many of the organizations included throughout *Connections* are also involved in advocacy work.

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### CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NY (CANY)

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**PO Box 793, Brooklyn, NY 11207**

**Telephone: 212.254.5700**

[www.correctionalassociation.org](http://www.correctionalassociation.org)

An independent organization in New York with authority under state law to monitor prisons and report findings to the legislature and the broader public by documenting and sharing system trends. Advocates for reform at individual prisons and at the system level. Also confidentially communicates with incarcerated people about their experiences through the mail, one-on-one interviews, and collect phone calls, and serves as a platform for those to share their experiences.

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### CRIP JUSTICE

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[www.cripjustice.org](http://www.cripjustice.org)

Advocates and shares resources around the intersections of polic-

ing, prisons, and disability justice. Campaigns to free disabled people currently incarcerated in jails, prison, 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.

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## ENVISION FREEDOM FUND—COURT WATCH NYC

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[www.courtwatchnyc.org](http://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.

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## FREEDOM AGENDA

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<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. Member meetings are on the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm. Visit the website or contact [fa@urbanjustice.org](mailto:fa@urbanjustice.org) for resources, including research and fact sheets, and more information on events.

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

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IWOC HQ, PO Box 414304, Kansas City, MO 64141

[www.incarceratedworkers.org](http://www.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.

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## JMACFORFAMILIES

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[www.jmacforfamilies.com](http://www.jmacforfamilies.com)

Works to abolish the current child welfare system while creating a system that truly supports families and builds community. Conducts legislative, judicial, and media advocacy, and organizes in communities directly impacted by child welfare surveillance and control. Campaign priorities include reimagining mandated reporting and access to timely representation for family's being investigated by ACS, including parents who are currently incarcerated. Visit the website for more information and events.

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## THE MARSHALL PROJECT

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[www.themarshallproject.org](http://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 new legal developments, prison programs, stories that inspire hope, criminal science reads, and "Life Inside" stories, which readers will have a chance to write themselves. People who are currently incarcerated and interested in receiving News Inside directly, can write to:

**News Inside**  
**The Marshall Project**  
**156 West 56th Street, Suite 701**  
**New York, NY 10019**

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## PRISON LEGAL NEWS

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**PO Box 1151, Lake Worth, FL 33460**

**Telephone: 561.360.2523**

[www.prisonlegalnews.org](http://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.

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## **PRISON POLICY INITIATIVE**

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**PO Box 127, Northampton, MA 01061**

[www.prisonpolicy.org](http://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, a legal resources database, and information on COVID-19 and the criminal legal system.

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## **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.

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

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[www.stopspying.org](http://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.

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## **WORTH RISES**

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

[www.worthrises.org](http://www.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.

# Education

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YOUR TEACHERS  
ARE ALL AROUND YOU.  
ALL THAT YOU PERCEIVE,  
ALL THAT YOU EXPERIENCE,  
ALL THAT IS GIVEN TO YOU  
OR TAKEN FROM YOU,  
ALL THAT YOU LOVE OR HATE,  
NEED OR FEAR  
WILL TEACH YOU—  
IF YOU WILL LEARN.  
— OCTAVIA E. BUTLER, *PARABLE OF THE SOWER*

# 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.

**Note:** The NYS Education Department's contract with the vendor which provided the HSE exam, the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC), expired December 2021. **As of 2022, the GED test will serve as the NYS HSE exam.** 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.

For more information on the GED test, along with up-to-date information on the alternative pathways to earn an HSE diploma, visit [www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/high-school-equivalency-hse](http://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](http://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 passing transcript, \$4.00 for a copy of a failing 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**

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

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

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**Main Office: 310 East Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10458**  
**Telephone: 917.275.6975**  
[www.nypl.org/events/classes/english](http://www.nypl.org/events/classes/english)

Offers virtual English classes in 10-week cycles for adults 18 and over. Classes are for intermediate- and advanced-level students. Registration is required. Documentation is not required. For more information and to register for classes, visit the website or email [esol@nypl.org](mailto:esol@nypl.org).

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## **BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—ADULT LEARNING CENTERS**

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**10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238**  
**Telephone: 718.622.4460**  
[www.bklynlibrary.org/adult-learning/learning-centers](http://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. Also offers English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), classes and assistance with obtaining a High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma, basic computer literacy classes, and informational workshops. Provides help with citizenship preparation. Visit the website for class schedules and registration information.

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## QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—ADULT LEARNER PROGRAM & NEW AMERICAN PROGRAM

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### Adult Learner Program

89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432

Telephone: 718.990.8509

[www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/adult-learners](http://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 classes; citizenship preparation; technology training; social service assistance; and referrals with trained case managers. Visit the website or email [alpref@queenslibrary.org](mailto: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](http://www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/new-americans)

[www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/new-americans/learn-english](http://www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/new-americans/learn-english)

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. Provides ESOL classes at beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels as well as English conversation groups. Citizenship application or other immigration legal services (visas, green cards, etc.) are referred to other community based organizations. Visit the website or email [napref@queenslibrary.org](mailto:napref@queenslibrary.org) for more information.

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## **NYS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (HSE)**

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**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](http://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.

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## **NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—ADULT EDUCATION**

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**High School Equivalency Central Processing Unit**  
**475 Nostrand Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11216**  
**Telephone: 646.481.8227**

[www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/adult-education](http://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. Also offers career and technical education (CTE) classes. All classes are tuition-free and taught by certified teachers. Call for a list of classes offered, and to register and determine placement.

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## **CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL—ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM**

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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 232](#).

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

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<http://literacy.cuny.edu>

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.

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## GODDARD RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER—OPTIONS CENTER

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352 West 110th Street, New York, NY 10025

Telephone: 212.678.4667

[www.goddard.org](http://www.goddard.org)

Offers assistance for New Yorkers ages 16 and over choosing and applying to college and other post-secondary education options. Provides help with financial aid, scholarships, internships, essay-writing, and portfolios. Call to make an appointment and for walk-in hours.

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## IMANI HOUSE, INC.—ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

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76-A 5th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Telephone: 718.638.2059

[www.imanihouse.org](http://www.imanihouse.org)

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

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## LITERACY PARTNERS

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

Telephone: 212.725.9200

[www.literacypartners.org](http://www.literacypartners.org)

Offers free English-for-parents classes, basic reading for adults, HSE support for young parents, and Spanish-language parenting programs. All classes are online. Contact for schedules and registration information.

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## OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW (OBT)

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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 347](#).

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## PER SCHOLAS INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOLOGY

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Telephone: 718.991.8400

[www.perscholas.org](http://www.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 range from IT support to cybersecurity, and last 8–18 weeks. 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.

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## UNION SETTLEMENT—ADULT EDUCATION

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237 East 104th Street, New York, NY 10029

Telephone: 212.828.6017

[www.unionsettlement.org](http://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 you will find a description of the computer-training programs offered by the three public library systems.

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### THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—TECHCONNECT

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**Telephone: 917.275.6975**

[www.nypl.org/computers](http://www.nypl.org/computers)

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

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## **BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)**

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[www.bklynlibrary.org/calendar](http://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.

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## **QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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[www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/technology-training/tech-workshops](http://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 website for a schedule of classes and registration information.

# **Continuing Education**

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## **BARD PRISON INITIATIVE (BPI)—BARD MICROCOLLEGES**

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**Telephone: 845.785.7308**

<https://microcollege.bard.edu>

Full scholarship, accredited college programs where students earn Bard College Associate in Arts degrees by attending classes at one of two locations: Brooklyn Public Library's Central Library at Grand Army Plaza and 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 admissions and application process.

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**BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE—FUTURE NOW** 

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**Gould Residence Hall, 2155 University Avenue, Room 417, Bronx,  
NY 10453**

**Telephone: 718.289.5852**

[www.bcc.cuny.edu/Future-Now](http://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.

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**COLLEGE & COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP (CCF)** 

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

**Telephone: 646.380.7777**

[www.collegeandcommunity.org](http://www.collegeandcommunity.org)

A nonprofit that helps women with criminal legal system involvement earn college degrees. College counseling and financial advisement are offered to participants. Academic scholarships and incentives such as transportation assistance, book assistance, and school supplies are provided per school semester for participants. The Career Advancement Program (CAP) provides career-readiness consultation, resource referrals, job-search and placement assistance, internship opportunities, and on-the-job training. All CAP participants must complete a total of two workshops to stay in good standing (workshops held weekly). The Women Influencing Systems & History (WISH) program is an 8-week advocacy training program. Appointments must be made for intake.

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

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**2 Court Square, Long Island City, NY 11101**

[www.law.cuny.edu](http://www.law.cuny.edu)

Provides information for those interested in attending law school after incarceration as well as support when applying, including writing letters of support for admission. Continued support during law school includes free first-year textbooks and tutoring for formerly incarcerated students enrolled in CUNY School of Law. For more information please contact [filsaa@mail.law.cuny.edu](mailto:filsaa@mail.law.cuny.edu).

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## CUNY LEHMAN COLLEGE—REENTRY@LEHMAN

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**250 Bedford Park Blvd., West, Bronx, NY 10468**  
[www.lehman.edu/re-entry-at-lehman](http://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 were 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 please contact [penny.prince@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:penny.prince@lehman.cuny.edu).

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## JOHN JAY COLLEGE—INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND OPPORTUNITY

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### Mailing Address

**524 West 59th Street, Suite 609B, New York, NY 10019**  
**Telephone: 646.781.5231**  
[www.justiceandopportunity.org](http://www.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.

Also offers periodic advocacy training and welcomes new members into policy reform campaigns. 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.

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## STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (SUNY)

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### SUNY Welcome Center

116 East 55th Street, New York, NY 10022

Telephone: 212.364.5821

[www.suny.edu/attend/suny-in-nyc](http://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 updated information on walk-in hours.

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## CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)

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### University Offices

205 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 212.997.2869

[www.cuny.edu](http://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. Various languages are spoken. Accessible to people with disabilities.

Below outlines the basic steps for applying to an undergraduate program at CUNY found online at [www.cuny.edu/admissions/undergraduate/apply](http://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](http://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 for submitting 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

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

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[www.cuny.edu/academics/academic-programs/model-programs/cuny-fatherhood-academy](http://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 enrollment, contacts, and more information.

# Financial Aid

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## FINAID

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[www.finaid.org](http://www.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.

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

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Telephone: 800.433.3243

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.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.

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## NYS HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION

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99 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12255

Telephone: 888.697.4372

[www.hesc.ny.gov](http://www.hesc.ny.gov)

Administers Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and other New York State grants and scholarships. The website provides links to a variety of financial aid resources and additional planning information.

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**PRISON SCHOLAR FUND** 

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

[www.prison scholars.org/what-we-do/for-prospective-scholars](http://www.prison scholars.org/what-we-do/for-prospective-scholars)

Provides education and employment assistance to currently and formerly incarcerated people. Incarcerated students interested should send an application request by mail with a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope (SASE) enclosed.

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**AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND**

8333 Greenwood Blvd., Denver, CO 80221

Telephone: 800.776.3863 or 303.426.8900

[www.collegefund.org](http://www.collegefund.org)

Awards scholarships to full-time students at accredited non-profit 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.

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**ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

1850 M Street NW, Suite 245, Washington, DC 20036

Telephone: 877.808.7032 or 202.986.6892

[www.apiasf.org](http://www.apiasf.org)

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

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**HISPANIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

[www.hsf.net](http://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.

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## SHAWN CARTER FOUNDATION—SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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[www.shawncartersf.com](http://www.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.

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## UNCF

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1805 7th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001

Telephone: 800.331.2244

[www.uncf.org](http://www.uncf.org)

Awards scholarships and internships to students from low- and moderate-income families to attend college. Visit the website for more detailed information and to download applications.

# 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. Due to COVID-19, programs may be conducted by distance learning.

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## BARD COLLEGE—BARD PRISON INITIATIVE (BPI)

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Facilities: 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

[www.bpi.bard.edu](http://www.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 six 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 provided ongoing individualized support in areas of housing, continuing education, and career development. BPI partners with other institutions to offer paid fellowships through which alumni can gain work experience and professional connections in a variety of fields.

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## BENNINGTON COLLEGE—PRISON EDUCATION INITIATIVE (PEI)

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Facility: Great Meadow

One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201

Telephone: 802.442.5401

[www.bennington.edu/prison-education-initiative](http://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.

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## CORNELL UNIVERSITY—CORNELL PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAM (CPEP)

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**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.

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## HUDSON LINK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN PRISON



**PO Box 862, Ossining, New York 10562**

**Telephone: 914.941.0794**

[www.hudsonlink.org](http://www.hudsonlink.org)

Acts as the administrator of a variety of college programs in five different correctional facilities by partnering with nine 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 applicants must agree to a facility hold because they must wait at least one semester before being accepted into the program. Once students

are accepted into the program, they are required to take any necessary placement exams for the college that will be administering the courses and granting credits.

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. Hudson Link advises, assists, and supports those students who were unable to fulfill their degree requirements while incarcerated in reenrolling them to complete their degrees at various on-campus locations. Also partners with reentry organizations to provide supportive services for alumni. The Alumni Services Manager and Alumni Coordinator provide job-readiness skills including resume writing, job search assistance, interview attire, laptops, professional mentoring, and internship opportunities.

**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, Vassar College

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



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**Facility: Otisville**

**524 West 59th Street, Suite 603 BMW, New York, NY 10019**  
[www.justiceandopportunity.org/educational-pathways/prison-to-college-pipeline](http://www.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.

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## MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN COLLEGE—BEDFORD HILLS COLLEGE PROGRAM (BHCP)



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**Facility: Bedford**

**Degree: Associate of Arts in Social Sciences, Bachelor of Arts in Sociology**

**221 East 71st Street, New York, NY 10021**

**Telephone: 212.517.0469**

[www.mmm.edu/prison-education/bedford-hills-college-program](http://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.

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**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY—PRISON EDUCATION PROGRAM  
(NYU PEP)** 

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**Facility:** Wallkill

**Degree:** Associate of Arts in Liberal Studies

**20 Cooper Square, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10003**

**Telephone: 212.992.8673**

<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 and are taught in-person at the facility. Individuals at Wallkill who would like to apply for consideration to the college program must submit a written application and must have a high school diploma or equivalency. Admitted students are provided peer mentors, weekly tutoring, technology literacy training, and reentry student services. Non-degree programming is also available for students including the annual creative writing publication, computer tutorials, book clubs, performing arts, and more.

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

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**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](http://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 note to the Education Department at the facility they are located at 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, be within five years of release, 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 to NCCC.

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

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**Facilities: Fishkill, Sing Sing, Woodbourne**

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

**Telephone: 914.276.7848**

[www.risinghopeinc.org](http://www.risinghopeinc.org)

A not-for-profit educational organization, offering a post-secondary course of study designed to prepare people for ministry or work in the helping professions, where college-level courses are taught by volunteers. The program consists of two semesters, each 15 weeks in length, with classes five evenings per week. Courses are not credit bearing and do not apply to the Limited Credit Time Allowance.

Has an articulation agreement with Nyack College and SUNY Empire State College. Alumni who apply to Nyack College's Organizational Management degree program and are accepted will be granted transfer credit for up to 30 credit hours of Rising Hope courses. 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 referrals for housing, MetroCards for initial assistance with city transportation, a mentor, and a laptop computer.

# Housing

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HOME IS WHERE THE HEART BEGINS, BUT NOT WHERE THE HEART STAYS.

— HANIF ABDURRAQIB



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY C. HENDRICKS

# Shelters

NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES (DHS) 

Emergency Information Line: 311

[www.nyc.gov/dhs](http://www.nyc.gov/dhs)

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

## Housing for individuals convicted of a sex offense

It can be difficult to find housing providers that can 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 89](#).

For counseling services for individuals convicted of a sex offense, please see the listings for Mustard Seed Counseling Services ([page 143](#)), New York Counseling for Change ([page 143](#)), and Shiloh Consulting ([page 144](#)).

88 HOUSING

# Intake Centers for Single Adults

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NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES (DHS)—  
INTAKE CENTERS 

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Telephone: 311

[www1.nyc.gov/site/dhs/shelter/singleadults/single-adults.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dhs/shelter/singleadults/single-adults.page)

DHS considers a single adult to be any person over age 18, 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. The intake centers for single adults

are separated by gender. 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** or email **info@srlp.org**.

**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. All programs are designed to help clients overcome homelessness.

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.

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**30TH STREET INTAKE FOR MEN** 

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

Intake shelter for men. Open 24 hours.

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## FRANKLIN SHELTER AND INTAKE CENTER FOR WOMEN



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**1122 Franklin Avenue, Bronx, NY 10456**

**Telephone: 311**

Intake and assessment shelter for women. Open 24 hours.

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## HELP WOMEN'S CENTER

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**116 Williams Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11207**

**Telephone: 311**

Intake and assessment shelter for women ages 18 and over. Open 24 hours.

# Drop-In Centers for Single Adults

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## CAMBA—THE GATHERING PLACE

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**2402 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11233**

**Telephone: 718.385.8726**

[www.camba.org/programs/drop-in-center-respite-program](http://www.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.

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

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**120 East 32nd Street, New York, NY 10016**

**Telephone: 212.883.0680**

[www.grandcentralneighborhood.org/services/mainchance-drop-in-center](http://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, and help for active clients seeking permanent housing. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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## PROJECT HOSPITALITY

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[www.projecthospitality.org](http://www.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. Provides referrals to mental health services, and alcohol and substance use treatment services.

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## URBAN PATHWAYS—OLIVIERI DROP-IN CENTER

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**257 West 30th Street, New York, NY 10001**

**Telephone: 212.947.3211**

[www.urbanpathways.org/programsandservices](http://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. 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 DHS Prevention Assistance and Temporary Housing (PATH) intake center.

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

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

Telephone: 311

[www1.nyc.gov/site/dhs/shelter/families/adult-families.page](http://www1.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, 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 (6 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 IDNYC
- Green card, driver's license, passport, visa, or work ID 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 these rules may have consequences including but not limited to the temporary discontinuance of shelter services.

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

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**151 East 151st Street, Bronx, NY 10451**

**Telephone: 718.503.6400**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/dhs/shelter/families/families-with-children-applying.page](http://www1.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:

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

### Three-quarter housing

Three-quarter houses are buildings that rent beds in apartments and houses. These buildings are operated by for-profit companies and are currently unregulated in NYC. Originally fed by referrals from the city shelter system, operators now also recruit tenants leaving substance use disorder units, or being discharged from

hospital psychiatric units or correctional facilities. Some companies advertise support services and assistance with finding permanent housing, but the quality and frequency of these services are varied and have received criticism by residents and advocacy groups.

On [page 186](#) 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. Leave a message on their intake line at **212.417.3705** or call **212.417.3700** for information about where and when they meet with clients throughout NYC.

## Organizations for People Without Homes

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### ABRAHAM HOUSE

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340 Willis Avenue, Bronx, NY 10454

Telephone: 718.292.9321

[www.abrahamhouse.org](http://www.abrahamhouse.org)

Provides transitional housing 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.

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### ACACIA NETWORK—GREENHOPE SERVICES FOR WOMEN, INC.

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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 266](#).

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

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345 East 102nd Street, New York, NY 10029

Telephone: 646.672.2973

[www.doe.org/programs/housing](http://www.doe.org/programs/housing)

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 health care and sobriety support, in partnership with other providers.

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## THE FORTUNE SOCIETY

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Provides supportive emergency, phased-permanent, and permanent housing solutions for homeless people with histories of incarceration and their families.

See the full listing for The Fortune Society on [page 52](#).

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## HOUR CHILDREN

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Provides transitional and permanent supportive housing in communal and independent settings throughout Queens for formerly incarcerated women and their children.

See the full listing for Hour Children on [page 315](#).

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## THE LADIES OF HOPE MINISTRIES (THE LOHM)—HOPE HOUSE NYC

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Telephone: 646.600.8573

[www.hopehouse.nyc](http://www.hopehouse.nyc)

Provides housing for single women who have experienced incarceration and are returning to NYC for up to one year. Services include help obtaining an ID and Social Security card, third-party

professional case management and medical care, help searching for permanent housing, job search and interview techniques, and on-site therapists. The intake form can be found on the website.

See the full listing for The LOHM on [page 266](#).

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## PROVIDENCE HOUSE

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**703 Lexington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221**

**Telephone: 718.455.0197 or 718.778.1310**

[www.providencehouse.org](http://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 Women's Community Justice Project (WCJP), PATH, and the DHS. No walk-ins. 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.

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## WOMEN'S PRISON ASSOCIATION (WPA)

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

See the full listing for WPA on [page 57](#).

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## ACE PROGRAMS FOR THE HOMELESS

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**30-30 Northern Blvd., Suite B100, Long Island City, NY 11101**

**Telephone: 212.274.0550**

[www.acenewyork.org](http://www.acenewyork.org)

Assists New Yorkers with reentering the workforce. Project Comeback, a vocational rehabilitation program, provides soft skills

training, adult education in literacy and math, supplemental skills training (Occupational Safety & Health Administration [OSHA]; Food Protection), paid work experience opportunities, individualized counseling, and job placement assistance. Participants graduate when they secure full-time permanent employment. Project Stay, an employment-retention aftercare program, offers graduates life-long support and services assisting with maintaining employment and transitioning to self-sufficiency.

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**BAILEY HOUSE** 

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**1751 Park Avenue, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10035**  
**Telephone: 212.633.2500**  
[www.baileyhouse.org](http://www.baileyhouse.org)

Provides confidential, bilingual services including housing, health, and support to adults and children living with HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses. Participants can be referred through NYC's HIV/AIDS Service Administration (HASA) or call directly for intake information. Provides programs that specifically serve transgender individuals and LGBTQI+ youth.

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**THE BOWERY MISSION** 

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**277 Bowery, New York, NY 10002**  
**Telephone: 212.674.3456**  
[www.bowery.org](http://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. Call for locations, hours, and intake information.

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**BREAKING GROUND** 

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**505 8th Avenue, New York, NY 10018**  
**Telephone: 212.389.9300 / Central Intake: 800.324.7055**

[www.breakingground.org](http://www.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.

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## **BRONXWORKS—HOMELESS OUTREACH TEAM**

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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 336](#).

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## **CENTER FOR URBAN COMMUNITY SERVICES (CUCS)**

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**198 East 121st Street, New York, NY 10035**

**Telephone: 212.801.3300**

[www.cucs.org](http://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 Reentry Coordination System facilitates referrals to supportive housing including coordination of video teleconference interviews, and referrals to care coordination for people living with serious mental illness and who are being released from NYS prisons to the five boroughs of NYC.

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## COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

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**129 Fulton Street, New York, NY 10038**

**Telephone: 212.776.2000 / Crisis Hotline: 888.358.2384**

[www.coalitionforthehomeless.org](http://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.

The Resource Guide, available on the website, is a directory of information on food, shelter, and services for homeless individuals and families. Borough-based resource lists are also regularly updated during the COVID-19 pandemic and can be found at [www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/covid-19](http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/covid-19).

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## COVENANT HOUSE NEW YORK

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

See the full listing for Covenant House on [page 307](#).

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## PROJECT RENEWAL

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

**Telephone: 212.620.0340**

[www.projectrenewal.org](http://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.

## Housing Assistance

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### NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)

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Telephone: 718.707.7771

[www.nyc.gov/nycha](http://www.nyc.gov/nycha)

**Bronx/Manhattan/Queens Customer Contact Center**  
478 East Fordham Road, 2nd Floor, Bronx, NY 10458

**Hours: Mon–Fri 8–5**

**Brooklyn/Staten Island Customer Contact Center**  
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 <https://apply.nycha.info>. 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.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (HPD)

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**100 Gold Street, New York, NY 10038**  
**Telephone: 212.863.6300**  
[www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/index.page](http://www1.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 homebuying lotteries, as well as additional resources for apartment seekers. Information is offered in multiple languages.

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## NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)— HOMEBASE

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**Telephone: 311**  
[www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/homebase.page](http://www1.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.

# Rentals

It is extremely difficult in most areas of NYC to find decent housing at an affordable rent. It may require time and patience for indi-

viduals 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 is contracted, be prepared to pay a fee of up to 15 percent of a year's rent.

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

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**Telephone: 311**

**Affordable Housing Lottery Helpline: 212.863.7990**

[www.nyc.gov/housingconnect](http://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.

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## METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ON HOUSING

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**Tenant Hotline: 212.979.0611**

[www.metcouncilonhousing.org](http://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, advice, assistance, and brief answers to rights as a tenant including information about evictions.

## **Tenant Rights & Housing Discrimination**

In NYC, tenants have many rights relating to the safety and quality of their housing. In addition, rent regulation laws have been renewed and strengthened, including an increase in civil penalties for landlords who harass tenants.

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 211](#).

More information for renters can be found in the *COVID-19* chapter, starting on [page 33](#).

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

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**Telephone: 833.499.0343**  
[www.nyshcr.org/rent](http://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.

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

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**Telephone: 311**  
[www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/tenants-rights-and-responsibilities.page](http://www1.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 New York City tenant rights called *The ABCs of Housing* that can be found online.

Visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/covid-19-updates.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/services-and-information/covid-19-updates.page) for updated housing resources and information related to COVID-19.

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## NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)—MAINTENANCE COMPLAINT

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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. If the NYCHA property is privately managed the report should be made directly to the management company first, which can be found by contacting NYCHA.

Visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/covid-19-resources.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/covid-19-resources.page) for the most recent information and updates related to COVID-19.

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## NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION—LEGAL SERVICES FOR TENANTS

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Telephone: 311 and ask for the “Tenant Helpline”

[www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/legal-services-for-tenants.page](http://www1.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.

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## NYC MAYOR’S OFFICE TO PROTECT TENANTS (MOPT)

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[www1.nyc.gov/content/tenantprotection/pages/covid19-home-quarantine](http://www1.nyc.gov/content/tenantprotection/pages/covid19-home-quarantine)

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 [www1.nyc.gov/content/tenantresourceportal/pages](http://www1.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.

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## HOUSING COURT ANSWERS

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**Housing Court Hotline: 212.962.4795**

[www.housingcourtanswers.org](http://www.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.

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## JUSTFIX.NYC

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[www.justfix.nyc](http://www.justfix.nyc)

A website with online tools for tenants, housing organizers, and legal advocates. The Learning Center has information about COVID-19, 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. It also links to data from city agencies. 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).

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

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**1075 Grand Concourse, Suite 1B, Bronx, NY 10452**  
**Telephone: 718.538.3344**

[www.naicany.org](http://www.naicany.org)

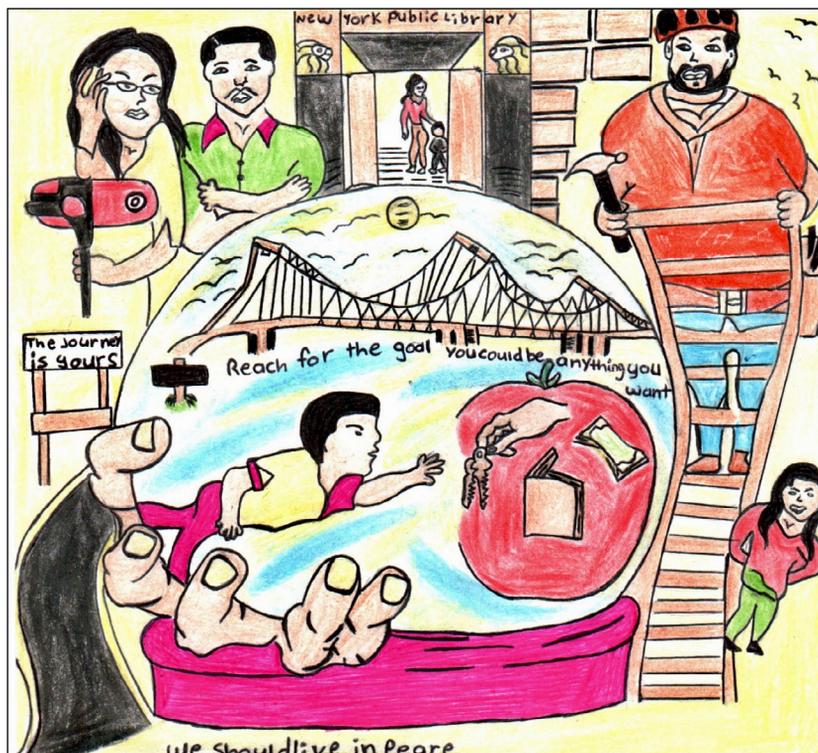
Offers eviction prevention and rental assistance application services to single adults, families, and older people who are Bronx tenants. Can submit a Family Eviction Prevention Subsidy (FEPS) application and provide free legal representation to tenants. Contact for registration and eligibility information.

# Financial Assistance

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I AM SO TIRED OF WAITING,  
AREN'T YOU,  
FOR THE WORLD TO BECOME GOOD  
AND BEAUTIFUL AND KIND?  
LET US TAKE A KNIFE  
AND CUT THE WORLD IN TWO—  
AND SEE WHAT WORMS ARE EATING  
AT THE RIND.

— LANGSTON HUGHES, *TIRED*



ARTWORK BY ABIDA MCINTOSH

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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page).

## Public Benefits

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### NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)

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**General Infoline: 718.557.1399**

[www.nyc.gov/hra](http://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. Chinese and Russian information is available by phone. Visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page) to find updated information on open locations.

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## LEGAL AID SOCIETY—ACCESS TO BENEFITS (A2B) HELPLINE

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**Helpline: 888.663.6880 (Mon–Fri 10am–3pm)**  
[www.legalaidnyc.org/get-help/government-benefits](http://www.legalaidnyc.org/get-help/government-benefits)

Assists NYC residents with HRA public assistance, employment and unemployment benefits matters, issues related to Medicaid/health law, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and disability and other benefits and issues related to COVID-19. Interpreters are available for all languages.

See the full listing for Legal Aid Society on [page 184](#).

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## URBAN JUSTICE CENTER

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Provides New Yorkers help with access to public assistance and other forms of aid.

See the full listing for Urban Justice Center on [page 189](#).

# Temporary Cash Assistance

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## NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)—CASH ASSISTANCE

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**Infoline: 718.557.1399**  
[www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/cash-assistance.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/cash-assistance.page)

Recipients of this benefit fall into four general categories:

- Families with children under 18 (or 21 if they attend school) without sufficient means of support due to absence or incapacity of one or both parents (Aid to Dependent Children, or ADC)
- Families with dependent children without sufficient means of support because of an unemployed parent (Aid to Dependent Children with Unemployed Parent, or ADC-U)
- Certain persons in need of financial assistance for such

reasons as temporary illness, layoff, or injury (Home Relief, or HR)

- Persons in need of special services

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 will receive car fare and childcare expenses so that they can meet their requirements. For a list of Job Centers in one's area, call **718.557.1399** or visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/locations/locations.page).

## Emergency Assistance

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### NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)— SPECIAL GRANT

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Telephone: **718.557.1399**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/special-grant-document-guide.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/special-grant-document-guide.page)

NYC residents may apply for a one-time emergency grant, also called a one-shot, when an unforeseen circumstance prevents the applicant from meeting an expense. An applicant must meet eligibility guidelines and is subject to an investigative review of the application. Emergency grant 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.

# Food Stamps (SNAP)

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## NYC HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION (HRA)—SNAP



**Infoline: 718.557.1399**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/snap-benefits-food-program.page](http://www1.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 for food stamps at an HRA Job Center. For information on shopping for groceries online with SNAP benefits and a list of participating stores visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/snap-online-shopping.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/snap-online-shopping.page).

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## ACCESS NYC

**Telephone: 718.557.1399**

[www.nyc.gov/accessnyc](http://www.nyc.gov/accessnyc)

The online tool for applying for food stamps and other benefits. Call to request a mailed application package. The application is available on the HRA website and available in Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Korean, and Creole.

Updates related to benefits, food, housing, and unemployment due to COVID-19 are available at <https://access.nyc.gov/coronavirus-covid-19-updates>.

# Food

## NYC 311—FOOD PANTRIES AND SOUP KITCHENS

Telephone: 311

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

Call or visit the website to find nearby locations of food pantries, soup kitchens, free meals for seniors, and summer meals for children under 18.

## NYC FOOD POLICY—EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

Emergency Foodline: 866.888.8777

[www1.nyc.gov/site/foodpolicy/programs/emergency-food.page](http://www1.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](http://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

Telephone: 212.566.7855

[www.foodbanknyc.org/get-help](http://www.foodbanknyc.org/get-help)

A website to locate food pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers, and other resources to obtain meals in NYC neighborhoods. Contact by phone for more information on programs in the food assistance network. Also provides assistance with SNAP applications and re-certifications.

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## CATHEDRAL COMMUNITY CARES

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Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine

1047 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10025

Telephone: 212.316.7583

[www.stjohndivine.org/education/community](http://www.stjohndivine.org/education/community)

A soup kitchen that is open every Sunday from 10am–3pm for take-away brown bag meals. The Clothing Closet is available for distribution of emergency clothing free of charge. Call

**212.316.7584** to schedule an appointment for job interview clothing and attire. Can contact for clothing referrals for individuals being released from prison.

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## COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS—GRAND CENTRAL FOOD PROGRAM

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Provides healthy meals as well as other essential items at 25 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](http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/gcfp) for a list of stops.

See the full listing for Coalition for the Homeless on [page 102](#).

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## GROWN NYC

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**PO Box 2327, New York, NY 10272**

**Telephone: 212.788.7900**

[www.grownyc.org](http://www.grownyc.org)

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

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## HOLY APOSTLES SOUP KITCHEN

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**296 9th Avenue, New York, NY 10001**

**Telephone: 212.924.0167**

[www.holyapostlesnyc.org](http://www.holyapostlesnyc.org)

Provides meals Mon–Fri 10:30am–12:30pm. Pick up for groceries at the pantry is available Tue–Thu 1:30–2:30pm.

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## ST. JOHN'S BREAD AND LIFE

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795 Lexington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221

Telephone: 718.574.0058

[www.breadandlife.org](http://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**

[www1.nyc.gov/assets/donate/index.shtml](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/donate/index.shtml)

Visit the website for a list of locations to find clothing and more.

## Medical Assistance

**MEDICAID** 

Telephone: 877.267.2323 / NY Medicaid Helpline: 800.541.2831

[www.medicaid.gov](http://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. Information is available in over 20 languages online.

**MEDICARE** 

Telephone: 800.633.4227 / TTY: 877.486.2048

[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)

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

**ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE (EPIC)** 

**Helpline: 800.332.3742 / TTY: 800.290.9138**

[www.health.ny.gov/health\\_care/epic](http://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 8:30am–5pm.

## Victim Assistance

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**FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION (FTC)—BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION** 

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**600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20580**

**Telephone: 877.382.4357**

[www.ftc.gov](http://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, internet services, online shopping, computers, education, jobs, making money, or credit and debit, and more.

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**NYS OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES** 

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

**Telephone: 800.247.8035**

[www.ovs.ny.gov](http://www.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 in Bengali, Hatian-Creole, Russian, Chinese, and Korean.

# Financial Counseling

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

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

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

**Telephone: 917.275.6975**

[www.nypl.org/moneymatters](http://www.nypl.org/moneymatters)

Offers information and services to assist individuals in making financial choices. Webinars cover tax assistance, budgeting, college planning and financial aid, investing in stocks and bonds, avoiding scams and fraud, and more. Budget and Credit Coaching offers individuals ongoing assistance with debt problems. Financial Counseling offers individuals help with finances. Financial professionals will answer questions about any personal money matters one might have. Half-hour sessions are private and confidential. Medicare Counseling offers hour-long appointments providing guidance on enrollment, coverage, prescription drug plans, and costs. Visit the website for more information on registration and how to sign up.

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## BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—FINANCIAL SERVICES

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**10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238**

**Telephone: 718.622.4460**

[www.bklynlibrary.org/calendar/list/Finance](http://www.bklynlibrary.org/calendar/list/Finance)

[www.bklynlibrary.org/adult-learning/learning-centers](http://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, health care, 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.

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**INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS)** 

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**Telephone: 800.829.1040**  
[www.irs.gov](http://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.

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**CAMBA** 

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**1720 Church Avenue, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11226**  
**Telephone: 718.287.2600**  
[www.camba.org](http://www.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 programming updates and eligibility.

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**COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY**  

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**633 3rd Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10017**  
**Telephone: 212.254.8900**  
[www.cssny.org](http://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.

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## **MONEY MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL (MMI)**

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**Telephone: 866.889.9347**

[www.moneymanagement.org](http://www.moneymanagement.org)

**903 Sheridan Avenue, 2nd Floor, Suite 1, Bronx, NY 10451**

**1501 Broadway, 12th Floor, Office #12021, New York, NY 10036**

**161-10 Jamaica Avenue, Suite 407, Jamaica, NY 11432**

Provides free counseling for people with financial or credit problems. Offers advice for student loans (by appointment over the phone), foreclosures, mortgage, and bankruptcy. Help with preparing budgets and how to establish credit is also available. Call 24 hours, 7 days a week.

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## **URBAN UPBOUND**

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**Administration Office**

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

**Telephone: 718.784.0877**

[www.urbanupbound.org](http://www.urbanupbound.org)

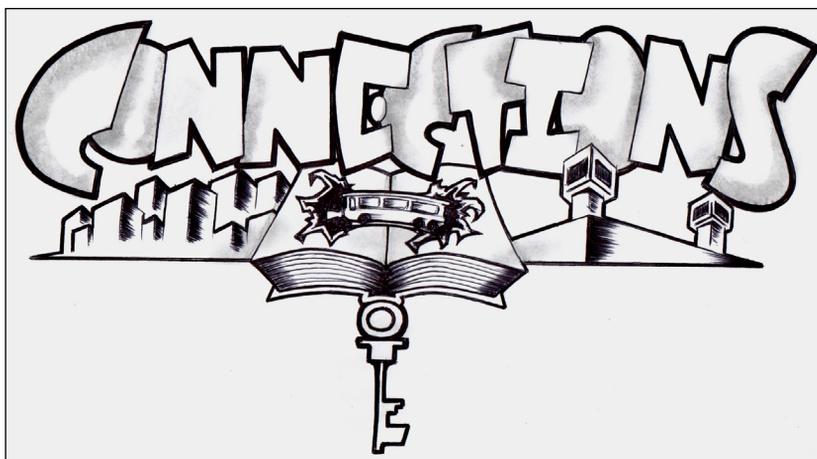
Provides services to public housing residents and other low-income New Yorkers in locations throughout NYC. Offers employment services, financial counseling, free tax preparation, Urban Upbound federal credit union, youth development, a college access program, and a worker cooperative initiative. Visit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

# Physical & Mental Health

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I'M ENVIOUS OF THE CLOUDS WHO CAN FROM TIME TO TIME FALL COMPLETELY APART & EVERYONE JUST SAYS, IT'S RAINING, & SOMEONE MIGHT EVEN BRING CATS & DOGS INTO IT, NO ONE SAYS, STOP BEING SO DRAMATIC OR YOU SHOULD SEE A PROFESSIONAL.

— CHEN CHEN, *ODE TO MY ENVY*



ARTWORK BY S. LUCAS

USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

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## NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS—CORRECTIONAL HEALTH SERVICES (CHS)

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Telephone: 347.774.7000

[www.nychealthandhospitals.org/correctionalhealthservices](http://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/correctionalhealthservices)

Provides medical, nursing, dental, vision, substance use treatment, and mental health services, including social work reentry support, to patients from pre-arraignment through discharge and reentry. Emergency response, urgent care, and access to nurses and physicians are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### **Substance use**

Provides treatment and support to patients with substance use disorders (SUDs), including opioid-use disorders (OUD). Services start at intake and include substance use screening and counseling, and overdose prevention and naloxone training. Through the Key Extended Entry Program (KEEP), provides methadone and buprenorphine maintenance to patients while they are in jail and provides linkages to community based treatment and harm reduction services to patients reentering their communities. Also maintains a voluntary, housing area-based program that provides counseling and recovery support to patients, and provides overdose prevention training and naloxone kits to people visiting loved ones on Rikers Island.

### **Community Connections Service (CCS)**

Provides reentry support to all patients, starting at intake. Helps with Medicaid applications, provides harm reduction screening and counseling, including naloxone training. Obtains consents and community contact information, and engages patients to facilitate reentry placement. Makes jail-based referrals to support continuity of care. Maintains a dedicated jail-based phone line for patients to discuss reentry needs and receive information regarding jail-wide initiatives; the phone line is accessible from jail housing areas, Mon–Fri 8am–5pm by dialing **777#**.

### **Hepatitis C**

Initiates treatment for hepatitis C while patients are incarcerated, or continues treatment for those who enter jail during treatment. When a patient is discharged before they have finished their

treatment regimen, referrals are provided to ensure treatment continues in the community.

**Community Re-entry Assistant Network (CRAN)**

Provides reentry support in the community to all patients post-release. 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 six months post-release. CRAN offices (below) are open Mon–Fri 9am–5pm. 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: 718.975.0180

**Queens**

120-34 Queens Blvd., Suite 225, Kew Gardens, NY 11415  
Telephone: 718.268.5657

**Staten Island**

120 Stuyvesant Place, Suite 410, Staten Island, NY 10301  
Telephone: 718.975.0180

**Point of Reentry & Transition (PORT) Practices**

**PORTline: 646.614.1000**

Provides telephone assistance and in-person navigation and patient care in community Health + Hospitals facilities. 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. Same-day appointments are available and patients will be seen regardless of insurance status. For information about jail-based healthcare, where to get help with reentry needs, and to be connected to the PORT Practices, call or email **CHSPORTline@nychhc.org**.

**Bellevue Hospital PORT Practice**  
462 1st Avenue, New York, NY 10016

**Kings County Hospital PORT Practice**  
451 Clarkson Avenue, E Building, Brooklyn, NY 11203

## Free & Low-Cost Medical Care

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

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**Hotline: 347.396.7959**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/sexual-health-clinics.page](http://www1.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, and no parental consent is necessary. Call or visit the website for a list of clinic locations across NYC. The hotline is available Mon–Fri 9–3:30. No appointment is necessary, but know that wait times may be longer due to reduced capacity safety measures being taken.

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### THE ALLIANCE FOR POSITIVE CHANGE

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

**Telephone: 212.645.0875 / Testing Hotline: 855.427.2692**

[www.alliance.nyc](http://www.alliance.nyc)

Provides services for conditions including HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, substance use disorder, mental illness, and other chronic health conditions for individuals living in NYC. 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. COVID-19 testing and vaccination referrals available. Haitian Creole, and Russian languages are also available. Mobile van testing available via testing hotline. Call or visit the website for a list of operating locations.

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## THE BEDFORD-STUYVESANT FAMILY HEALTH CENTER



[www.bsfhc.org](http://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. French Creole is spoken. Signing capability is also on-site. Telehealth services are also available.

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## CHARLES B. WANG COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

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[www.cbwchc.org](http://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 for locations and services being offered, hours, and to schedule an appointment. Mandarin, Cantonese, Taishanese, Shanghainese, Fujianese, Vietnamese, and Korean are spoken. Telehealth services are also available.

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## COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE NETWORK

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60 Madison Avenue, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10016

Telephone: 866.246.8259

[www.chnny.org](http://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 provided. Dental, mental health, foot care, prenatal care, 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, the nearest site, and languages spoken. Centers accessible to people with disabilities. Telehealth services are also available.

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

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230 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 646.946.4482

[www.institute.org/health-care/services/the-tlc-clinic](http://www.institute.org/health-care/services/the-tlc-clinic)

Offers safe, sensitive, and respectful medical care for anyone who has experienced sexual violence or human rights abuses regard-

less 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 health care, dentistry, and acupuncture. Telehealth services are also available.

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

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

**Telephone: 212.523.6500**

[www.mountsinai.org/patient-care/iam/services/diverse-communities](http://www.mountsinai.org/patient-care/iam/services/diverse-communities)

Offers comprehensive medical and support services for formerly incarcerated individuals ages 18 and over. Provides primary health/medical care, OB/GYN, mental health treatment, dental care, case management 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.

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**THE NEW YORK CITY FREE CLINIC (NYCFC)** 

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**230 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011**

**Telephone: 212.206.5200**

[www.nycfreeclinic.com](http://www.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 benefits information) will help determine insurance eligibility. Contact for appointments and updated hours.

# General Health Information Resources

## **NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—ADVANCE CARE PLANNING**

[www.health.ny.gov/community/advance\\_care\\_planning](http://www.health.ny.gov/community/advance_care_planning)

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

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

150 Broadway, Suite 355, Albany, New York 12204

Telephone: 800.663.6114

[www.health.ny.gov/professionals/doctors/conduct](http://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](http://www.nyc.gov/doh)

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

## **CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)**

Telephone: 800.232.4636

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Provides information on diseases and other health topics. Call anytime to request free publications or information on HIV/AIDS, cancer, diabetes, tobacco-related illness, nutrition, and other topics. Information on many topics is available in multiple languages.

## **MEDLINE PLUS**

[www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)

A website that answers health questions, referring to authoritative information and tutorials from government agencies, medical schools, and organizations. It also has a medical dictionary, information about drugs and supplements, health news, and directories for hospitals, doctors, and dentists. Information in other languages is available on many topics.

# Helplines: Physical Health

## NYC TUBERCULOSIS PROVIDER HOTLINE

Telephone: 844.713.0559

[www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/health-topics/tuberculosis.page](http://www1.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

Telephone: 800.277.2345

[www.cancer.org](http://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 local resources. Information packets and publications can be found on the website or requested by mail.

## THE POISON CONTROL CENTER HOTLINE

Telephone: 800.222.1222 or 212.764.7667

[www.poison.org](http://www.poison.org)

Poison specialists are available 24 hours a day to provide free, expert, and confidential guidance in a poison emergency. Translators are available for 150 different languages.

# Health Insurance

For more information on Medicaid, see [page 117](#) in the chapter *Financial Assistance*.

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## NY STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—HEALTH PLAN MARKETPLACE

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Helpline: 855.355.5777 / TTY: 800.662.1220

[www.nystateofhealth.ny.gov](http://www.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 over the age of 65.

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 New York State 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.

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 120](#).

## HIV & AIDS

### **NYS HIV/AIDS INFORMATION AND COUNSELING HOTLINE** <sup>(ES)</sup>

**AIDS Hotline: 800.541.2437 / Counseling Hotline: 800.872.2777**

[www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/about/hotlines.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/about/hotlines.htm)

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)**

**125 Worth Street, New York, NY 10013**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/aids-hiv.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/aids-hiv.page)

Write for free brochures and information on AIDS in English or Spanish. The website 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)** <sup>(ES)</sup>

**Telephone: 212.971.0626 / TTY: 212.971.2731**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/hiv-aids-services.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/hiv-aids-services.page)

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

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### **NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—THE HIV UNINSURED CARE PROGRAMS** <sup>(ES)</sup>

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**Empire Station, PO Box 2052, Albany, NY 12220**

**Telephone: 800.542.2437**

[www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/resources/adap](http://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 mail or phone.

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**ARGUS COMMUNITY, INC.—ACCESS PROGRAM** 

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Provides intensive case management and services for people living with HIV. Assistance with medical care, housing, access to benefits, legal help, and other needs are provided.

See the full listing for Argus on [page 155](#).

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**BOOM!HEALTH**  

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Telephone: 718.295.2666

[www.boomhealth.org](http://www.boomhealth.org)

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

**Wellness Center**  
3144 3rd Avenue, Bronx, NY 10451

Provides youth drop-in, supportive counseling, showers and food pantry (144th Street location), legal advocacy, domestic violence education, peer mentoring, case management services, support and health education, prevention education and HIV testing, and syringe services. Call for hours and services offered at each location.

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**BRIDGING ACCESS TO CARE** 

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Telephone: 347.505.5000

[www.bac-ny.org](http://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 community-service program for underserved communities in NYC living with or affected by HIV or AIDS. Provides culturally sensitive prevention education, testing, counseling and support groups, comprehensive social services and referrals, a community food pantry, and more. Harm reduction services are provided for people living with HIV who have substance use histories, while the First Steps Program provides intensive outpatient substance use disorder treatment.

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**COMMUNITY HEALTH ACTION OF STATEN ISLAND** 



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**56 Bay Street, Staten Island, NY 10301**

**Telephone: 718.808.1300 / Hotline: 718.448.2255**

[www.chasiny.org](http://www.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 and LGBTQ survivors and people involved in the criminal legal system, job-search assistance, housing assistance, counseling, 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.

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**FORGING AHEAD FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SUPPORT (FACES)**  

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**123 West 115th Street, New York, NY 10026**

**Telephone: 212.283.9180**

[www.facesny.org](http://www.facesny.org)

Provides free services to New Yorkers, including those who are chronically homeless, living with HIV/AIDS, living with substance use disorder, 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.

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**THE FORTUNE SOCIETY**  

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

**Telephone: 212.691.7554**

[www.fortunesociety.org](http://www.fortunesociety.org)

Offers a range of health services to formerly incarcerated people including mental health and substance use counseling, 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 52](#).

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**GMHC** 

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**307 West 38th Street, New York, NY 10018**

**Telephone: 212.367.1000 / Hotline: 800.243.7692**

[www.gmhc.org](http://www.gmhc.org)

Provides direct services and support for any New Yorker including youth, and transgender and gender nonconforming people affected by HIV or AIDS. Offers one-on-one counseling and numerous support groups for people living with HIV or AIDS and their loved

ones. Other programs include financial and legal counseling, educational workshops and training, workforce development, mental health services including psychiatric care, substance use counseling, food pantry, housing assistance, and public education and advocacy efforts. Offers free home HIV tests with the support of a counselor and referrals for STI testing. Free brochures and information on AIDS in English or Spanish available upon request.

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**HAITIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY COALITION (HCC)** 

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**3807 Church Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11203**  
**Telephone: 718.940.2200**  
[www.hccinc.org](http://www.hccinc.org)

Provides services to people and families affected by HIV or AIDS. Services include health and fitness programs, housing placement assistance, and mental health counseling at the Be Well Center. French and Creole are spoken.

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**THE HISPANIC AIDS FORUM, INC.** 

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**975 Kelly Street, Suite 201, Bronx, NY 10459**  
**Telephone: 718.328.4188**  
[www.hafnyc.org](http://www.hafnyc.org)

**HAF-Queens Pride House**  
**76-11 37th Avenue, Jackson Heights, New York 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.

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## PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF NYC—PROJECT STREET BEAT



Telephone: 855.778.2328  
[www.projectstreetbeat.org](http://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, and includes STI screening and treatment, HIV testing and counseling, needle exchange and overdose prevention counseling, wellness exams, and gynecologic care. Visit the website for information on mobile unit hours, locations, and to schedule an appointment. Telehealth services are available.

## AIDS Discrimination

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### PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICES OF NEW YORK (PLSNY)



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

See the full listing for PLSNY on [page 188](#).

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### NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Contact to file a complaint for discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on age, race, color, religion/creed, natural hair or hairstyles, 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 211](#).

## Hepatitis C

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### AMERICAN LIVER FOUNDATION

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**39 Broadway, Suite 2700, New York, NY 10006**

**Telephone: 800.465.4837**

[www.liverfoundation.org/new-york-state-resource-center](http://www.liverfoundation.org/new-york-state-resource-center)

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.

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

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**1600 Clifton Road NE, Mailstop US12-3, Atlanta, GA 30329**

**Telephone: 800.232.4636 / TTY: 888.232.6348**

[www.cdc.gov/hepatitis](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis)

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

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



Provides telehealth services including integrated mental health, substance use, and primary healthcare services for youth and adults.

See the full listing for CASES on [page 47](#).

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## NYS OFFICE OF MENTAL HEALTH—BRONX PSYCHIATRIC CENTER



1500 Waters Place, Bronx, NY 10461

Telephone: 718.931.0600

[www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/facilities/brpc](http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/facilities/brpc)

Provides inpatient and outpatient psychiatric intervention and supportive counseling to individuals with serious mental illness. No referral necessary.

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## COMMUNITY ACCESS

17 Battery Place, Suite 1326, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 212.780.1400

[www.communityaccess.org](http://www.communityaccess.org)

**Blueprint Supported Education**

2090 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., 12th Floor, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 646.503.5600

[www.blueprintsed.org](http://www.blueprintsed.org)

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, and time and stress management; employment and internship opportunities; and more.

The Howie the Harp Peer Training program provides an intensive, multi-week instruction series developed to train people with experience in mental health recovery to become peer support workers in the human service sector. To apply, applicants must have a mental health diagnosis, have earned a high school diploma or equivalent, and live in NYC. Classes are conducted in English.

East Village Access and the Community Access Mobile Teams (Care Coordination, Intensive Mobile Treatment, Pathway Home, Shelter ACT) offer telehealth services. Contact for in-person service updates and options.

Also runs the **Crisis Respite Center**, an alternative to emergency hospitalization for individuals ages 18 and over experiencing crisis. Call **646.257.5665 (then press 0)** for more information.

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**FOUNTAIN HOUSE INC.**  

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**425 West 47th Street, New York, NY 10036**

**Telephone: 212.582.0340**

[www.fountainhouse.org](http://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.

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**GOODWILL INDUSTRIES—BRONX ACE PROGRAM** 

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**384 East 149th Street, Bronx, NY 10455**

**Telephone: 718.401.2555**

[www.goodwillnynj.org](http://www.goodwillnynj.org)

Offers supported employment services to adults 18 and over

with mental health and co-occurring substance use diagnoses. Services include intake interviews, one-on-one and group job counseling, job development and placement assistance, and off-site and on-site job coaching.

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## THE JEWISH BOARD—MENTAL HEALTH CLINICS

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**135 West 50th Street, New York, NY 10020**

**Telephone: 212.582.9100 / Toll-free: 888.523.2769**

**Hotline: 844.663.2255**

[www.jewishboard.org](http://www.jewishboard.org)

Provides individual, couple, family, and group therapy, as well as evaluation, assessment, and medication management for New Yorkers in 15 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.

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## NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI)—NYC METRO

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**505 8th Avenue, Suite 1103, New York, NY 10018**

**NYC Helpline: 212.684.3264**

[www.naminycmetro.org](http://www.naminycmetro.org)

Provides free education and support groups for individuals and families affected by mental illness. The helpline is available Mon–Fri 10–6 to answer any questions about mental health. Visit the website for updated summer and holiday hours.

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## NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH—INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER

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**6001 Executive Blvd., Room 6200, Bethesda, MD 20892**

**Telephone: 866.615.6464 / TTY: 866.415.8051**

[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://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.

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## SERVICES FOR THE UNDERSERVED (S:US)

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**463 7th Avenue, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018**  
**Telephone: 212.633.6900 / Intake Services: 877.583.5336**  
[www.sus.org](http://www.sus.org)

A nonprofit human services agency that offers housing, treatment and rehabilitation, skill-building, and care coordination for New Yorkers.

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## VENTURE HOUSE

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[www.venturehouse.org](http://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 community based mental health agency for adults living with mental illness. Offers job development/coaching, supported education services, supportive housing, virtual programming, and 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, podcasts, data tracking/entry, kitchen and dining services, basic computer literacy, and more.

# Counseling

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## JUST DETENTION INTERNATIONAL

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**3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010**

**Telephone: 213.384.1400**

[www.justdetention.org](http://www.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.

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## MUSTARD SEED COUNSELING SERVICES

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**1118 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11216**

**Telephone: 718.875.7411**

[www.mustardseedforensic.com](http://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.

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## NEW YORK COUNSELING FOR CHANGE

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**30-46 Northern Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101**

**Telephone: 718.424.6191**

[www.nyc4c.org](http://www.nyc4c.org)

Provides group behavioral counseling services and psychiatric services from licensed counselors. Specialized services include problematic sexual behaviors, batterer accountability, anger/aggression, bias incidents, and DWI/U (evaluation only). Medicaid/insurance accepted for sexual behavioral counseling.

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**SHILOH CONSULTING**

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566 7th Avenue, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.564.7631

[www.shilohconsultingllc.com](http://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, and Individual and Couples Counseling. Telehealth services are available.

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**STOP IT NOW!**

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351 Pleasant Street, Suite B-319, Northampton, MA 01060

Telephone: 413.587.3500 / Helpline: 888.773.8368

[www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org)

A toll-free number for adults who are at risk for sexually abusing a child and for friends and family members of sexual abusers and/or survivors. Available Mon–Fri 12–6. 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.

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**ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)**

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Offers free and confidential support services to the LGBTQI+ community and people living with HIV who are survivors of bias violence, intimate-partner violence, pickup violence, police misconduct, HIV-related violence, rape, and sexual violence.

See the full listing for AVP on [page 285](#).

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## 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](http://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 services provided. Call to schedule an intake appointment.

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## MALE SURVIVOR

PO Box 276, Long Valley, NJ 07853

[www.malesurvivor.org](http://www.malesurvivor.org)

Provides support and resources for male survivors of sexual trauma.

# Helplines: Mental Health

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## NYC HEALTH—MOBILE CRISIS TEAMS (MCTS)

<https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/providers/mct-referral>

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. There are about two dozen teams in the city, and they are available in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens.

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 **NYC Well** at **888.692.9355**.

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. NYC Well counselors will assess the person/situation and provide an appropriate intervention. If the person/situation is eligible for MCT services, NYC Well will send the referral to the most appropriate MCT, generally depending upon the person's age and location.

**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.

**Children’s Mobile Crisis Teams** provide care and short-term management for children and adolescents 20 and younger who are experiencing severe behavioral crises. All teams consist of mental health professionals and family peer advocates. Provides an in-person visit within two hours of receiving a referral 8am–10pm. Will call with a response within 30 minutes of receiving a referral 10pm–8am. For more information contact NYC Well.

**NYC WELL** 

Telephone: **888.692.9355** / TTY: **711**

<https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us>

Offers free and confidential mental health support to all New Yorkers, who can speak to counselors via phone, text, or chat and get access to mental health and substance use disorder services, in more than 200 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Provides suicide prevention and crisis counseling, peer support and short-term counseling, assistance scheduling appointments or accessing other mental health services, and follow-up services.

**ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (ADAA)**

[www.adaa.org](http://www.adaa.org)

Provides information on prevention, treatment, and symptoms of anxiety, depression, and related conditions. Not a direct service agency.

**CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH ATTENTION-DEFICIT/  
HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (CHADD)** 

Telephone: **800.233.4050**

[www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)

Provides information and referrals on ADHD, including local support groups. Information specialists are available at **866.200.8098**, Mon–Fri 1–5.

**DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR SUPPORT ALLIANCE (DBSA)**

Telephone: **800.826.3632**

[www.dbsalliance.org](http://www.dbsalliance.org)

Provides information on bipolar disorder and depression; offers in-person and online support groups and forums.

**INTERNATIONAL OCD FOUNDATION** 

**Telephone: 617.973.5801**

[www.iocdf.org](http://www.iocdf.org)

Provides information on OCD and treatment referrals.

**NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS ASSOCIATION (NEDA)** 

**Helpline: 800.931.2237**

[www.nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org)

Provides support to individuals and families affected by eating disorders. The helpline is confidential and support is available Mon–Thu 11–9 and Fri 11–5.

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE** 

**Lifeline: 800.273.8255 / TTY: 800.799.4889**

**Spanish: 888.628.9454**

[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Offers free and confidential support for people in distress, and prevention and crisis resources 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**SCHIZOPHRENIA & PSYCHOSIS ACTION ALLIANCE**

**Telephone: 240.423.9432 / Toll-free: 800.493.2094**

[www.sczaction.org](http://www.sczaction.org)

Offers free, personalized information and resources to people with schizophrenia-related illnesses and their families.

**SIDRAN INSTITUTE**

**Telephone: 410.825.8888**

[www.sidran.org](http://www.sidran.org)

Provides information and referrals to manage and treat trauma and dissociation and maintains a helpline for information and referrals.

**TARA**

**Telephone: 888.482.7227**

[www.tara4bpd.org](http://www.tara4bpd.org)

Offers a referral center for information, support, education, and treatment options for Borderline Personality Disorder.

# 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 may also provide low-cost or free services that can be a more affordable alternative to one-on-one therapy, and many organizations in *Connections* offer this service. The following are some online resources to find therapists.

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## LATINX THERAPY

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[www.latinxtherapy.com](http://www.latinxtherapy.com)

An organization working to destigmatize mental health in the Latinx community. Maintains an online directory to find a Latinx Therapist (98% are Spanish speakers) and also offers culturally-grounded workshops and services. The website provides additional wellness resources and a weekly podcast that discusses mental health topics.

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## NATIONAL QUEER AND TRANS THERAPISTS OF COLOR NETWORK (NQTTCN)

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[www.nqttcn.com](http://www.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.

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## THERAPY FOR BLACK GIRLS

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[www.therapyforblackgirls.com](http://www.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 weekly podcast that discusses mental health topics.

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## THERAPY FOR BLACK MEN

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[www.therapyforblackmen.org](http://www.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

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TURNING

TURNING INTO MY OWN

TURNING ON IN

TO MY OWN SELF

AT LAST

TURNING OUT OF THE

WHITE CAGE, TURNING OUT OF THE

LADY CAGE

TURNING AT LAST

ON A STEM LIKE A BLACK FRUIT

IN MY OWN SEASON

AT LAST

— LUCILLE CLIFTON, *TURNING*

# 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)**



**Helpline: 877.846.7369**

[www.oasas.ny.gov](http://www.oasas.ny.gov)

Provides information and referrals to state-certified treatment programs and an online treatment availability dashboard, searchable by location. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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## **ADDICTION CARE INTERVENTIONS (ACI)**



[www.acirehab.org](http://www.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 11375**

**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.

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## EXODUS TRANSITIONAL COMMUNITY—WELLNESS CENTER



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An 822 OASAS–licensed outpatient program that provides mental health assessments and individual counseling. Services include substance use disorder treatment, anger management, and relapse prevention.

See the full listing for Exodus on [page 51](#).

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## EXPONENTS



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Provides treatment and recovery services, educational services, and professional development and training services for those impacted by HIV/AIDS, substance use, incarceration, and behavioral health challenges.

See the full listing for Exponents on [page 51](#).

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## NEW DIRECTIONS—ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM



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500 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Telephone: 718.398.0800

[www.newdirectionsbrooklyn.com](http://www.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 work-

shops. Accepts most insurance and Medicaid. Offers sliding-scale fees. Telehealth services are available.

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## REALIZATION CENTER

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[www.realizationcenternyc.com](http://www.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. Also operates a treatment program specifically for formerly incarcerated people as well as programs for families and adolescents ages 19–25. Sliding-scale fees. Most major insurance plans are accepted, including Medicaid. Hours are Mon–Fri 8:30am–9pm and Sat 8:30am–2pm. Telehealth services are available.

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## ALBERT EINSTEIN COLLEGE OF MEDICINE—MONTEFIORE-EINSTEIN DIVISION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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<https://einsteinmed.org/departments/psychiatry-behavioral-sciences/division-of-substance-abuse>

**Montefiore Wellness Center at Melrose**

**260 East 161st Street, Bronx, NY 10451**

**Telephone: 718.993.3397**

**Montefiore Wellness Center at Port Morris**

**804 East 138th Street, Bronx, NY 10454**

**Telephone: 718.742.7803**

**Montefiore Wellness Center at Waters Place**

**1510 Waters Place, Bronx, NY 10461**

**Telephone: 718.597.3888**

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. Contact for specific program information, hours, and updated information about the medication-assisted opioid treatment program.

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**ARGUS COMMUNITY, INC.** 

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**760 East 160th Street, Bronx, NY 10456**

**Telephone: 718.401.5700 / Intake: 718.401.5720**

[www.arguscommunity.org](http://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.

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**ARMS ACRES—OUTPATIENT SERVICES** 

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[www.armsacres.com](http://www.armsacres.com)

**3584 Jerome Avenue, Bronx, NY 10467**

**Telephone: 718.653.1537**

**80-02 Kew Gardens Road, Kew Gardens, NY 11415**

**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.

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## THE BOWERY MISSION

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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. Identification required, preferably a Social Security card or birth certificate. 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.

See the full listing for The Bowery Mission on [page 100](#).

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## CREATE, INC.

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**73 Lenox Avenue, New York, NY 10026**  
**Telephone: 212.663.1975 / Clinic: 212.663.1596**  
[www.createinc.org](http://www.createinc.org)

An outpatient 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 emergency food distribution for the hungry.

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## ELMCOR YOUTH AND ADULT ACTIVITIES, INC.

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**107-20 Northern Blvd., Corona, NY 11368**  
**Telephone: 718.651.0096**  
[www.elmcor.org](http://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.

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## **GREENWICH HOUSE—CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY PROGRAM**

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**122 West 27th Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10001**

**Telephone: 212.691.2900**

[www.greenwichhouse.org](http://www.greenwichhouse.org)

An 822 outpatient treatment facility. Provides individual, couples, and family treatment, group and specialty group treatment, psychiatric evaluation, dual-diagnosis treatment, and medication management and Suboxone maintenance. Also offers vocational, educational, and computer programs. Fees are on a sliding scale and Medicaid is accepted. Contact for intake information and hours.

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## **LOWER EASTSIDE SERVICE CENTER, INC.**

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

**Telephone: 212.566.5372**

[www.lesc.org](http://www.lesc.org)

Provides a range of opioid treatment and care for people 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, HIV/AIDS supportive housing, and primary healthcare services are also offered. Call for locations and admission instructions.

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## **ODYSSEY HOUSE**

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**219 East 121st Street, New York, NY 10035**

Telephone: 212.987.5100 / Helpline: 866.888.7880

[www.odysseyhousenyc.org](http://www.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.

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## PHOENIX HOUSE

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Telephone: 888.671.9392 / Admission Inquiries: 844.815.1508

[www.phoenixhouse.org](http://www.phoenixhouse.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 Queens and Long Island. Call for hours and services at each location.

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## QUEENS VILLAGE COMMITTEE FOR MENTAL HEALTH FOR J-CAP, INC.



116-30 Sutphin Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11434

Telephone: 718.322.2500 / Intake: 718.322.2500

[www.jcaprograms.com](http://www.jcaprograms.com)

Offers a drug-free residential treatment program for people ages 18 and over. Educational and vocational services are provided. Walk-ins welcome, but appointments by phone or referral preferred.

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## SAMARITAN DAYTOP VILLAGE, INC.



138-02 Queens Blvd., Briarwood, NY 11435

Telephone: 718.206.2000 / Hotline: 718.943.8535

[www.samaritanvillage.org](http://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 programs 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. Specialized Model for Adult Re-entry (SMART) provides various classes and programs to individuals currently incarcerated or recently released. Contact for more information on services and locations.

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## START TREATMENT & RECOVERY CENTERS

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**22 Chapel Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201**

**Telephone: 800.211.0996**

[www.startny.org](http://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.

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## VIP COMMUNITY SERVICES

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**770 East 176th Street, Bronx, NY 10460**

**Telephone: 718.583.5150 / Intake: 800.850.9900**

[www.vipservices.org](http://www.vipservices.org)

Provides recovery and wellness services to people with histories of substance use disorder including outpatient and residential treatment, health services, care coordination, HIV/AIDS prevention, education and treatment, and supportive and permanent housing. Contact for hours. Telehealth services are available.

# Support Groups

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## AL-ANON—NYC

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4 West 43rd Street, Suite 308, New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212.941.0094

[www.nycalanon.org](http://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

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307 7th Avenue, Suite 201, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 212.647.1680

[www.nyintergroup.org](http://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.

## GAM-ANON FOR NEW YORK

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PO Box 307, Massapequa Park, NY 11762

Telephone: 718.352.1671

[www.gam-anon.org](http://www.gam-anon.org)

A support group for individuals whose lives have been affected by someone with a gambling disorder. Call or visit the website to find meeting information.

## NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS—GREATER NEW YORK REGION

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154 Christopher Street, Suite 1A, New York, NY 10014

Telephone: 212.929.7117 / Helpline: 212.929.6262

[www.newyorkna.org](http://www.newyorkna.org)

A support group for those recovering from substance use disorder. Call or visit the website for meeting information.

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## NEW YORK CRYSTAL METH ANONYMOUS INTERGROUP

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**Helpline: 855.638.4373**

[www.nycma.org](http://www.nycma.org)

A support group for those recovering from crystal meth use. Call or visit the website for meeting information.

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## PILLS ANONYMOUS

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[www.pillsanonymous.org](http://www.pillsanonymous.org)

A support group for those recovering from pill use. Visit the website for meeting information.

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## SEXUAL COMPULSIVES ANONYMOUS OF NEW YORK

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**111 East 14th Street, Suite 385, New York, NY 10003**

**Telephone: 917.722.6912**

[www.scany.org](http://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.

# Resources & Other Services

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## NYS SMOKERS' QUITLINE

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Telephone: 866.697.8487

[www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com)

Provides pre-recorded tapes on how to quit smoking, access to counselors, and other materials upon request. Will check with insurance for coverage of nicotine replacement therapy. Call Mon–Thu 9–9, Fri–Sun 9–5.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE (DOH)—NYC QUILTS

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[www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/smoking-nyc-quits.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/smoking-nyc-quits.page)

Provides a wide range of information on how to quit smoking and vaping.

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## AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

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Telephone: 800.242.8721

[www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

Offers free information packets on the risks of smoking and vaping, and how to quit.

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## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SHOPLIFTING PREVENTION

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225 Broadhollow Road, Suite 400E, Melville, NY 11747

Telephone: 631.923.2737 or 800.848.9595

[www.shopliftingprevention.org](http://www.shopliftingprevention.org)

Provides information to help with avoiding shoplifting. If court-ordered, the Shoplifters Alternative Course (SA Course) is available by mail or online.

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## SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)

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**Helpline: 800.662.4357**

[www.samhsa.gov](http://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**

[www.oasas.ny.gov/hopeline](http://www.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 WELL** 

**Telephone: 888.692.9355**

<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 [www.harmreduction.org](http://www.harmreduction.org) for resources to learn more including Harm Reduction 101.

Visit the **North American Syringe Exchange Network (NASEN)** website at [www.nasen.org/map](http://www.nasen.org/map) 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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/alcohol-and-drug-use-services.page](http://www1.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** call **NYC Well** at **888.692.9355** or visit <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/naloxone>.

### **Fentanyl use and testing**

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. Visit [www.harmreduction.org/issues/fentanyl](http://www.harmreduction.org/issues/fentanyl) for information on fentanyl use, myths and facts, and overdose prevention tips.

Fentanyl test strips can identify the presence of fentanyl in unregulated drugs. They can be used to test injectable drugs, powders, and pills. Being aware if fentanyl is present allows people to implement appropriate harm reduction strategies to reduce the risk of an overdose. **DoseTest** sells fentanyl test strips for \$1 each. The website provides information on how to use the test strips for both solid and liquid samples available at [www.dosetest.com](http://www.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 [www.oasas.ny.gov/prevent-overdose](http://www.oasas.ny.gov/prevent-overdose).
- The **Never Use Alone** hotline at **800.484.3731**, is a number that anyone can call when they are about to use a substance. An operator will then 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.

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## NEW YORK HARM REDUCTION EDUCATORS (NYHRE)

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104-106 East 126th Street, New York, NY 10035

Telephone: 212.828.8464

[www.nyhre.org](http://www.nyhre.org)

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. Location accessible to people with disabilities.

# Legal

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IF IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD, IT CERTAINLY  
TAKES A MOVEMENT TO UNDO AN OCCUPATION.

— RUTH WILSON GILMORE



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY JEREMY D. WILSON

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 332](#).

## 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](http://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 145](#). 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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/ccrb/index.page](http://www1.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 even though their orders are illegal. 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 alleged "restricted areas" regardless of what you are doing there.

## **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 [www.legalaidnyc.org/get-help/arrests-policing/what-you-need-to-know-about-protesting](http://www.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 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**.
- If you or someone you know was falsely arrested or a victim of police misconduct during a protest, contact the **Legal Aid Society** at **212.298.3303**.

### **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 178](#).

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. The digital self-defense curriculum is available at [www.defendourmovements.org/resource/digital-self-defense-curriculum](http://www.defendourmovements.org/resource/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, assess, 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 decision-making and risk-assessment systems, face and speaker recognition, and other digital surveillance tools. These tools use artificial intelligence and algorithms, 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 biased assessments and existing surveillance. 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 of what 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 delivers telephone services in 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, 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. Other 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 connected to the user’s personal computer.

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](http://www.stopspying.org/listening-beyond-the-bars).

### **Changes to NYC DOC Family Video Visiting**

Due to COVID-19, in-person visits at NYC DOC facilities are still limited and can be scheduled in advance online. Televisits, which can be done using any electronic device with a camera, an internet connection, and an active email account, are still being offered as an alternative. 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 NYC Administrative Code, 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/NYCrules/0-0-0-79126>.

Phone calls are also regularly recorded, however a significant difference is that 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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/doc/inmate-info/televisits.page](http://www1.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" to create a profile on a person. 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 then be programmatically searched. If the police take away your phone, you may not get it back easily. Back up your data regularly and store that backup in a safe place.

For more information **UpTurn** has published a comprehensive report called *Mass Extraction: The Widespread Power of U.S. Law Enforcement to Search Mobile Phones*, available online at [www.upturn.org/reports/2020/mass-extraction](http://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 tool guides

with 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. The digital self-defense curriculum is available at [www.defendourmovements.org/resource/digital-self-defense-curriculum](http://www.defendourmovements.org/resource/digital-self-defense-curriculum).

**Tactical Tech's Data Detox Kit**, available at [www.tacticaltech.org/projects/data-detox-kit](http://www.tacticaltech.org/projects/data-detox-kit), is a toolkit that walks you through multiple subjects including an alternative app center, privacy tips for protests, 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](http://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](http://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](http://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

In 2020, New York State replaced its discovery law with a new statute that requires evidence sharing between the prosecution and defense on an accelerated timeline—emphasizing the right of someone to fully understand any charges before making any decisions about accepting a plea bargain. Three months later, the statute was amended, relaxing the timeline and limiting disclosure of certain witnesses’ identifying information.

More information is available at  
[www.courtinnovation.org/publications/discovery-NYS](http://www.courtinnovation.org/publications/discovery-NYS).

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## THE BRONX DEFENDERS

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**360 East 161st Street, Bronx, NY 10451**  
**Telephone: 718.838.7878 / Emergency Hotline: 347.778.1266**  
[www.bronxdefenders.org](http://www.bronxdefenders.org)

A public defender organization representing Bronx residents in civil, 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. 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.

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## BROOKLYN DEFENDER SERVICES (BDS)

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**177 Livingston Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201**  
**Telephone: 718.254.0700**  
**Family Defense Practice: 347.592.2500**  
[www.bds.org](http://www.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.

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**COMMUNITY SERVICE SOCIETY**  

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**Legal Hotline: 646.759.8088**

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 120](#).

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**THE EXONERATION INITIATIVE (EXI)**  

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**233 Broadway, Suite 2370, New York, NY 10279**

**Telephone: 212.965.9335**

[www.exonerationinitiative.org](http://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.

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**FEDERAL DEFENDERS OF NEW YORK**  

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[www.federaldefendersny.org](http://www.federaldefendersny.org)

**Eastern District**

**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, Staten Island, and Long Island. The Southern District serves Manhattan, the Bronx, and counties north of New York City. Can be contacted through an individual's public defender.

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**GOOD CALL** 

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**Telephone: 833.346.6322**

[www.goodcall.nyc](http://www.goodcall.nyc)

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.

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**THE INNOCENCE PROJECT** 

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**40 Worth Street, Suite 701, New York, NY 10013**

**Telephone: 212.364.5340**

[www.innocenceproject.org](http://www.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 actually innocent, 3) where the defendant was convicted of a crime, and 4) where the crime occurred in the United States, but not Arizona, California, Illinois, Michigan, or Ohio. Contact by mail with a filled out intake form, which is available on the website.

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## **LAMBDA LEGAL**

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**120 Wall Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10005**

**Telephone: 212.809.8585**

[www.lambdalegal.org](http://www.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.

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## **LEGAL ACTION CENTER (LAC)**

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**225 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014**

**Telephone: 212.243.1313**

[www.lac.org](http://www.lac.org)

Provides free legal services for New Yorkers who face employment barriers or illegal discrimination based on their records of arrest and conviction. Services include help getting free NYS rap sheets (arrest and conviction records) and correcting rap sheet errors, applying for Certificates of Relief from Disabilities and Certificates of Good Conduct, obtaining employment licenses, and understand-

ing eligibility for record sealing. Additional free legal services are available for people with experience of substance use disorder or living with HIV or AIDS, including addressing illegal discrimination, health privacy rights, and barriers to obtaining medication for opioid use disorder. Must call to set up an appointment.

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**LEGAL AID SOCIETY**  

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**199 Water Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10038**  
**Telephone: 212.577.3300**  
**Prisoners Rights Project: 212.577.3530 (Mon–Fri 9–5 for conditions in prison or jail)**  
[www.legal-aid.org](http://www.legal-aid.org)

Offers free legal counsel and advice to NYC residents who cannot afford a private lawyer. Please 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. Please 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. Legal Aid 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**

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**LEGAL HAND** 

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[www.legalhand.org](http://www.legalhand.org)

**713 East Tremont Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457**

**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. Call to make an appointment.

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**LEGAL SERVICES NYC**  

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**40 Worth Street, Suite 606, New York, NY 10013**

**Telephone: 646.442.3600**

**Legal Assistance Hotline: 917.661.4500**

[www.legalservicesnyc.org](http://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 Brooklyn and Manhattan residents facing discrimination and barriers to employment based on conviction history. Call Mon–Fri 9:30–4. Help is available in any language.

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## **LGBT BAR ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK (LEGAL)**

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### **Administrative Office**

**120 Wall Street, Floor 19, New York, NY 10005**

**Telephone: 212.353.9118**

[www.lgbtbarny.org](http://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.

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## **MOBILIZATION FOR JUSTICE**

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**100 William Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10038**

**Telephone: 212.417.3700**

[www.mfjlegal.org](http://www.mfjlegal.org)

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.

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## **NEIGHBORHOOD DEFENDER SERVICE OF HARLEM**

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

**Telephone: 212.876.5500**

[www.ndsny.org](http://www.ndsny.org)

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

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**NEW YORK CITY BAR LEGAL REFERRAL SERVICE** 



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**42 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036**  
**Telephone: 212.626.7373 / Spanish: 212.626.7374**  
[www.citybarlegalreferral.org](http://www.citybarlegalreferral.org)

Assists with finding help with legal matters. Offers referrals to an experienced, screened, and approved lawyer or the right resource. Initial consultations are 30 minutes at no charge. If further consultation or representation with the lawyer is needed, fees are agreed with the lawyer.

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**NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)—  
LEGAL COUNSELING PROJECT** 

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**Telephone: 212.267.6646 x217**  
[www.nycla.org](http://www.nycla.org)

Provides free legal consultations to individuals seeking help in the areas of family law, employment law, and landlord/tenant 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](mailto:probono@nycla.org) for more information.

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**NEW YORK LEGAL ASSISTANCE GROUP** 

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**100 Pearl Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10004**  
**Telephone: 212.613.5000**  
**COVID-19 Legal Resource Hotline: 929.356.9582**  
[www.nylag.org](http://www.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. Call the hotline Mon–Fri 7am–1pm and leave a message to receive a follow-up call.

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## PAROLE PREPARATION PROJECT

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**135 West 20th Street, Suite 401, New York, NY 10011**  
**Telephone: 347.620.5906**  
[www.paroleprepny.org](http://www.paroleprepny.org)

An advocacy organization that works and collaborates with incarcerated individuals who are serving parole-eligible life sentences in NYS Prisons. Volunteers are trained to work alongside parole applicants as they prepare to appear before the NYS parole board. Those interested can write a letter directly.

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## PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICES OF NEW YORK (PLSNY)

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[www.plsny.org](http://www.plsny.org)

Provides free legal services to incarcerated people in NYS prisons, with regional offices in Albany, Buffalo, Ithaca, Newburgh, and Plattsburgh. 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 prisons. The immigration unit provides legal representation to non-citizens incarcerated in any NYS prison who are in immigration removal proceedings.

**Central Office in Albany**  
**41 State Street, Suite M112, Albany, NY 12207**  
**Telephone: 518.438.8046 / Immigration Office: 518.694.8699**

Facilities Served: Bedford Hills, CNYPC, Coxsackie, Eastern, Edgecombe, Great Meadow, Greene, Hale Creek, Hudson, Lincoln, Marcy, Mid-State, Mohawk, Otisville, Queensboro, Shawangunk, Sing Sing, Sullivan, Taconic, Ulster, Wallkill, Walsh, Washington, Woodbourne

**Buffalo Office**

**14 Lafayette Square, Suite 510, Buffalo, NY 14203**

**Telephone: 716.854.1007**

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: Downstate, Fishkill, Green Haven

**Plattsburg Office**

**24 Margaret Street, Suite 9, Plattsburgh, NY 12901**

**Telephone: 518.561.3088**

Facilities Served: Adirondack, Altona, Bare Hill, Clinton, Franklin, Gouverneur, Moriah Shock, Ogdensburg, Riverview, Upstate

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**URBAN JUSTICE CENTER**



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**40 Rector Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10006**

**Telephone: 646.602.5600**

[www.urbanjustice.org](http://www.urbanjustice.org)

A legal services and advocacy organization serving residents of NYC. Composed of eight initiatives consisting of the Domestic Violence Project, the Human Rights Project, Freedom Agenda, the Mental Health Project, the Youth Project, the Safety Net Project, Sex Workers Project, and the Street Vendor Project. Runs clinics offering help with legal issues including housing, immigration,

family law, and public benefits 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.

A more robust collection of legal material can be found at the New York Public Library’s Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library, located at 455 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

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

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435 West 116th Street, New York, NY 10027

Telephone: 646.470.2054

<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 online. Contact for information on pricing and order forms by mail.

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### LAWHELPNY

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[www.lawhelpny.org](http://www.lawhelpny.org)

An online tool for New Yorkers with legal questions. 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.

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## **PUBLIC ACCESS LAW LIBRARIES**

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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 the most updated information about services being offered. 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 Courts Public Access 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 many cases. Three months later, NYS passed a series of amendments, which went into effect in July 2020. These revisions made more cases eligible again for bail and detention.

In the initial reform, money bail and detention were eliminated for

nearly all misdemeanor and nonviolent felony cases. The amended reform makes more than two dozen additional charges eligible for bail and detention. The revisions also create new categories of defendants eligible for detention, such as individuals charged with a new case and a still pending case involving “harm to an identifiable person or property,” even when neither charge is otherwise eligible for bail. State law contains no definition of such “harm.”

### **New Release Conditions**

As introduced in the original statute, the amended law retains a presumption of release in all cases, unless there is a “risk of flight to avoid prosecution.” In cases where a risk is considered to exist, judges must use the “least restrictive condition(s)” necessary to assure the accused will return to court and comply with court conditions. The revised law adds to the list of nonmonetary conditions. Along with options such as pretrial supervision or travel restrictions, judges can impose conditions such as counseling, treatment, or intimate partner violence programming; maintaining employment or school attendance; or measures regarding victim safety.

For more information on the amended law and the impact on bail reform please visit [www.courtinnovation.org/publications/bail-revisited-NYS](http://www.courtinnovation.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 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at any of the following DOC facilities:

**Brooklyn Detention Complex**  
**275 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11201**

**Manhattan Detention Complex**  
**125 White Street, New York, NY 10013**

**Queens Detention Complex**  
**126-01 82nd Avenue, Kew Gardens, NY 11415**

**Vernon C. Bain Center**  
**1 Halleck Street, Bronx, NY 10474**

**Rikers Island**  
**16-16 Hazen Street, East Elmhurst, NY 11370**

For individuals housed at Horizon Juvenile Center, bail may be paid at Horizon or at any of the above locations. However, Horizon cannot accept payments for individuals detained at other facilities.

Bail can also be paid at the Bronx Criminal Court, Lower Level, Room M-05C, 7 days a week, 8am–1am.

### **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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/doc/inmate-info/inmate-lookup.page](http://www1.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 for which you paid bail 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 (DOF) 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, because that way you will avoid fees charged by commercial bail bondsmen.

## Locating Someone in Custody

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### FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS (BOP)

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**Telephone: 202.307.3198**

[www.bop.gov/locations](http://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.

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### US IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE)

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ES

**Telephone: 888.351.4024**

<https://locator.ice.gov/odls/#/index>

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.

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### NYS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION (DOCCS)

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ES

**Telephone: 518.457.5000**

[www.doccs.ny.gov](http://www.doccs.ny.gov)

Call or visit the website for a list of NYS correctional facilities, their addresses and phone numbers, information to locate someone who is currently incarcerated, and research documents.

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## NYC CENTRAL BOOKING

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**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.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION (DOC)

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**Telephone: 311**

[www.nyc.gov/doc](http://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 the city’s 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.

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## NYS UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM—WEBCRIMS

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[https://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/webcrim\\_attorney/](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 [www.dmv.org/ny-new-york/voter-registration.php](http://www.dmv.org/ny-new-york/voter-registration.php) 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**.

### **Ranked Choice Voting**

In 2019, New Yorkers passed a ballot measure to use ranked choice voting. This means that for some elections for city offices, voters can now rank up to five candidates in order of preference instead of choosing just one.

If a candidate receives more than 50% of 1st-choice votes, they are the winner. If no candidate earns more than 50% of 1st-choice votes, then counting will continue in rounds. At the end of each round, the candidate with the fewest votes will be eliminated. If you ranked the eliminated candidate 1st, your vote will go to the next highest ranked candidate on your ballot. This process will continue until there are two candidates left. The candidate with the most votes wins.

For more information about ranked choice voting including when and which elections will use it, how votes are counted, and more visit **NYC Votes** at [www.voting.nyc](http://www.voting.nyc).

### **Your Right to Vote**

The following information is from [www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/voting-rights](http://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 that when you check-in. They may ask you to swear under oath that you have a disability and that you have asked that person to help you. Your helper may also be required to sign a form swearing that they did not tell you how to vote.
- If there are long lines and you have a physical or mental health condition or disability that makes it difficult for you to stand in line, tell a poll worker.
- Tell election officials what you need. For example, if it's hard for you to stand, they should provide you with a chair or a place to sit while you wait. If the crowds or noise are hard for you, election officials can find a quiet place for you to wait and call you when it's your turn to vote.
- If you are not able to enter your polling place because the pathway to it is not fully accessible, ask poll workers for curbside assistance.
- If you have difficulty using the materials provided to make your ballot selections, review, or cast your ballot, let a poll worker know and ask for the help you need.
- If you face any challenges in voting privately and independently or are unable to cast your vote, report the problem to the

**Election Protection Hotline.** Trained attorneys can assist you and make sure that other voters do not experience the same problem.

Additional information:

- Find detailed voting guides from the **Bazon Center for Mental Health Law** at [www.bazon.org/our-work/voting](http://www.bazon.org/our-work/voting).
- For a toolkit on voting with a disability from the **Autistic Self Advocacy Network** visit [www.autisticadvocacy.org/policy/toolkits/voting](http://www.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](http://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 [www.signvote.org](http://www.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 <https://ag.ny.gov/civil-rights/voting-rights> 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](https://www.aclu.org/news/civil-liberties/block-the-vote-voter-suppression-in-2020).

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## BOARD OF ELECTIONS IN NEW YORK CITY

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Telephone: 866.868.3692 / TTY: 212.487.5496

[www.vote.nyc](http://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.

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## SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA)

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Telephone: 800.772.1213 / TTY: 800.325.0778

[www.ssa.gov](http://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, or the District of Columbia.

If you are unable to apply for a card online, you can contact Social Security by phone Mon–Fri 8–5:30.

Call **311** or visit <https://portal.311.nyc.gov/article/?kanumber=KA-03117> for the most updated informa-

tion on Social Security card center services, locations in NYC, and documentation needed.

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## **NYS DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES (DMV)**

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**224-260 South Pearl Street, Albany, NY 12202**

**Telephone: 518.486.9786 / TDD: 711 or 800.662.1220**

[www.dmv.ny.gov](http://www.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.

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## **NYS UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM—NAME CHANGES**

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**25 Beaver Street, New York, NY 10004**

**Telephone: 800.268.7869 / TTY: 711**

[www.nycourts.gov/courts/nyc/civil/namechanges.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/nyc/civil/namechanges.shtml)

Those who live in NYC may bring a name change proceeding in any county in the city. It costs \$65 to change a name in civil court. Forms can be found on the civil court's website or one may go to the name change location in each courthouse and get the forms from the court clerk.

Applicants must bring either an original or certified copy of their birth certificate. The papers will be reviewed by the court clerk and submitted to a judge. If approved, the applicant must publish the new name in one or more newspapers, for a fee.

Parents or legal guardians who want to change a child's name need a notarized consent form signed by any other parent or legal guardian of the child. If consent cannot be obtained, the other parent or legal guardian must be given notice of the name change case and come back to the 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 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 requests can be viewed by anyone because they are public records. If the name 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 records and/or avoid publication of the name change.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE (DOH)—OFFICE OF VITAL RECORDS

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125 Worth Street, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 311

[www.nyc.gov/vitalrecords](http://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](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm).

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## IDNYC

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Telephone: 311

[www1.nyc.gov/site/idnyc/index.page](http://www1.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.

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## OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK—MARRIAGE BUREAU

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Telephone: 311

[www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/html/marriage/license.shtml](http://www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/html/marriage/license.shtml)

Call or visit the website for updated information on how to obtain a marriage license. For information about the virtual marriage license process visit Project Cupid at [www.nyc.gov/Cupid](http://www.nyc.gov/Cupid).

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## PUERTO RICO FEDERAL AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATION

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[www.prfaa.pr.gov](http://www.prfaa.pr.gov)

Provides information to Puerto Ricans on how to obtain birth certificates, identification papers, and other important documents that may be needed for the job hiring process.

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## CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)—PUERTO RICO VITAL RECORDS

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Department of Health, Demographic Registry  
PO Box 11854, Fernandez Juncos Station, San Juan, PR 00910  
Telephone: 787.765.2929 x6131  
[www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/puerto\\_rico.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/puerto_rico.htm)

Provides information on cost and how to obtain birth, death, marriage, and divorce certificates.

## Discrimination, Grievances, & Rights

For information on avoiding discrimination while looking for work, see [page 362](#) in *The Job Search*.

### Grievance process while incarcerated

According to the Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA), you must

“exhaust” (use up) all of the available grievance procedures before you can take your complaint to court.

If you have an issue that cannot be resolved after you have verbally consulted with your Housing Officer, Counselor, or Legal or Grievance Coordinator, you may present a complaint in writing to the Grievance Coordinator in your facility who will guide you through the steps to a formal resolution. You may submit a complaint about things that directly affect you such as department policies, how the policies are carried out, or someone else’s behavior, including an officer.

### **How to write an effective grievance**

When using the Inmate Grievance Process, you should follow several guidelines to increase your chances of obtaining relief (help). First, if you file a formal grievance with a grievance resolution committee, write out your grievance in detail and list exactly what attempts you made to resolve the problem. If you do not try to resolve the problem on your own, your grievance may be dismissed and closed at the grievance committee hearing. Second, your complaint must show that you are personally affected by the policy or issue that you are filing a grievance against. If that is not the case, your complaint must show that you will be affected at some point in the future unless relief is granted and changes are made. Third, you should state the problem accurately and precisely. Using inflammatory language (such as curse words) in your complaint will reduce your chances of success. Fourth, the more specific you are about the relief you are seeking, the more likely you are to receive it. You should list in detail every aspect of relief that you seek because the Inmate Grievance Resolution Committee may not consider types of relief that you do not specifically request. For example, explain the conditions or policies you want changed.

The Jailhouse Lawyer’s Manual (JLM) has an entire chapter on how to file an effective grievance. See the full listing for JLM on [page 190](#).

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## NYS OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL



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Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 2, 16th Floor, Albany, NY  
12223

Hotline: 800.367.4448

[www.ig.ny.gov/form/complaint-form-long](http://www.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.

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## NYS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION (DOCCS)—OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS (OSI)



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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

[www.doccs.ny.gov/office-special-investigations-osi](http://www.doccs.ny.gov/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.

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## NYC BOARD OF CORRECTION (BOC)

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1 Centre Street, Room 2213, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.669.7900

[www1.nyc.gov/site/boc/index.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/boc/index.page)

An oversight board that regulates, monitors, and inspects the NYC correctional facilities. If you are within the NYC jail system, contact to file a complaint.

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## FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION (FTC)—IDENTITY THEFT RECOVERY

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Telephone: **877.438.4338** / TTY: **866.653.4261**  
[www.identitytheft.gov](http://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.

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## USA.GOV—CONSUMER ISSUES

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Telephone: **844.872.4681**  
[www.usa.gov/consumer](http://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.

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## NYC—311

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Telephone: **311** / TTY: **212.504.4115**  
[www1.nyc.gov/311](http://www1.nyc.gov/311)

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

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## NYC CIVILIAN COMPLAINT REVIEW BOARD

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**100 Church Street, New York, NY 10007**

**Telephone: 800.341.2272 or 311**

[www.nyc.gov/html/ccrb](http://www.nyc.gov/html/ccrb)

Call anytime 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.

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## NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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**Telephone: 212.416.0197 or 311**

[www.nyc.gov/humanrights](http://www.nyc.gov/humanrights)

Contact to file a complaint for discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on age, race, color, religion/creed, natural hair or hairstyles, 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.

LEGAL

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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, 1st Floor, New York, NY 10007**  
**Telephone: 212.306.7450**

**153-01 Jamaica Avenue, Room 203, Jamaica, NY 11432**  
**Telephone: 718.657.2465**

**60 Bay Street, 7th Floor, Staten Island, NY 10301**

Telephone: 718.390.8506

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION (DCWP)

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42 Broadway, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 311

[www.nyc.gov/dca](http://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.

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## NYC PUBLIC ADVOCATE

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[www.pubadvocate.nyc.gov](http://www.pubadvocate.nyc.gov)

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

## 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](http://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 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.

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 143](#).

### **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.

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## **NYS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION (DOCCS)**

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[www.doccs.ny.gov/prea](http://www.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**

[www.doccs.ny.gov/doccs-office-special-investigations-osi](http://www.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 activ-

ity 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 Corrections**

**Alfred E. Smith State Office Building**

**80 South Swan Street, 12th Floor, Albany, NY 12210**

**Telephone: 518.485.2346**

[www.scoc.ny.gov](http://www.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**

[www.ig.ny.gov](http://www.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.

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**NYC DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION (DOC)**

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[www1.nyc.gov/site/doc/directives/directives.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doc/directives/directives.page)

Call 311 from any NYC DOC facility.

City of New York

Department of Investigation—Complaint Bureau

180 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.825.5900

[www1.nyc.gov/site/doi/contact/contact-doi.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doi/contact/contact-doi.page)

**Board of Correction**

**1 Centre Street, Room 2213, New York, NY 10007**

**Telephone: 212.669.7900**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/boc/about/how-to-make-a-complaint.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/boc/about/how-to-make-a-complaint.page)

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**NYS OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES  
(OCFS)—JUVENILE FACILITIES**

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[www.ocfs.ny.gov/main/rehab/prea.asp](http://www.ocfs.ny.gov/main/rehab/prea.asp)

**New York State Justice Center**

**161 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054**

**Hotline: 855.373.2122**

[www.justicecenter.ny.gov/incident-reporting/report-abuse](http://www.justicecenter.ny.gov/incident-reporting/report-abuse)

The New York State Justice Center is the focal point for sexual abuse incident reporting and investigations for OCFS. Contact the New York State Justice Center with a suspected occurrence of sexual abuse in an OCFS residential juvenile justice facility. All reports of potential sexual abuse will be investigated by the Justice Center.

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**FEDERAL BUREAU OF PRISONS (BOP)**

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[www.bop.gov/inmates/custody\\_and\\_care/sexual\\_abuse\\_prevention.jsp](http://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.**

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## **US IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE)**

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[www.ice.gov/prea](http://www.ice.gov/prea)

To report sexual assault or harassment directly to DHS:

**ICE Detention Reporting and Information Line**

**Telephone: 888.351.4024 (from inside a detention facility: 9116#)**

**DHS Office of Inspector General/MAIL STOP 0305**

**Attn: Office of Investigations—Hotline**

**245 Murray Lane SW, Washington, DC 20528**

**Telephone: 800.323.8603 (from inside a detention facility: 518#)**

[www.oig.dhs.gov/about/contact](http://www.oig.dhs.gov/about/contact)

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. Any report of sexual abuse or fear of being abused or assaulted will not negatively affect your immigration case. The law states that no one can retaliate against you in any way for reporting sexual abuse or assault.

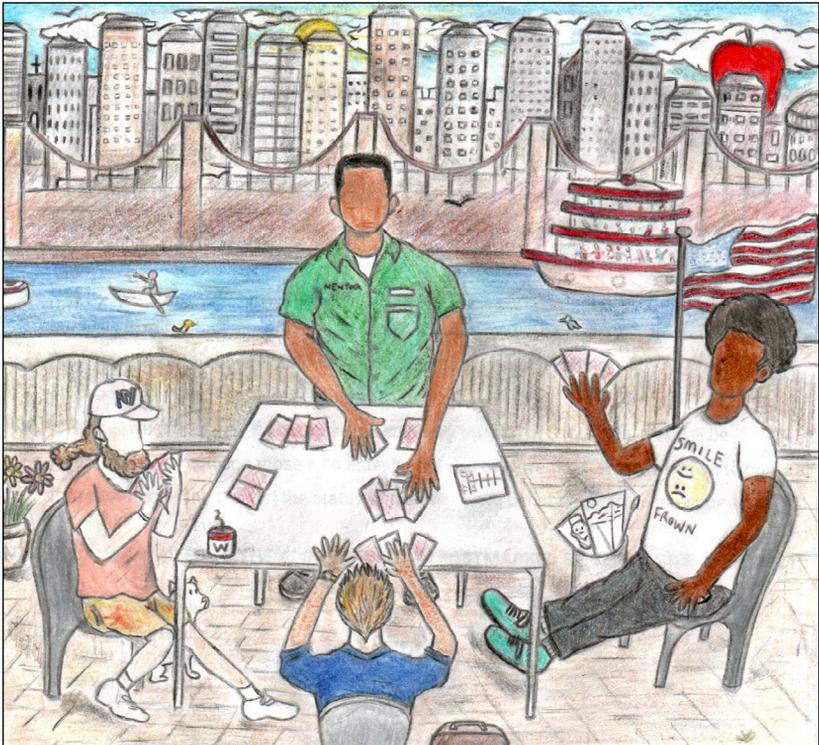
The Department of Homeland Security finalized regulations implementing PREA in 2014. Even with those regulations in place, DHS PREA standards do not protect immigrants in all detention facilities. The regulations are enforced in facilities that have contracts with DHS that are new, renewed, or modified since 2014.

# Immigrants

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YOU KNOW YOURSELF NOW ONLY AS THE OCEAN  
KNOWS THIS ISLAND—ALWAYS PULLING AWAY,  
ALWAYS, ALWAYS, RETURNING.

— LAUREN K. ALLEYNE, *NOTHING TO DECLARE*



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY SHAWN MITCHELL

# 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 [www.notechforice.com/resources](http://www.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 location cell phone data, see [page 174](#).

## 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, or
- People who ICE claims pose a “threat to public safety” and have an aggravated felony, or a wide range of convictions that are not necessarily a felony under criminal law, or people who ICE believes have participated in a gang.

### 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](http://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/ice-ruses) for more information on tactics ICE 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.](http://www.)

[immigrantdefenseproject.org](http://immigrantdefenseproject.org), [www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights](http://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights), and [www.informedimmigrant.com](http://www.informedimmigrant.com).

To report ICE raids in New York City, call the **Immigrant Defense Project** at **212.752.6422**.

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, 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 206](#).)

### **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/leadership/opr](http://www.ice.gov/leadership/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/homePage.do>.

### **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-preparednes](http://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org/emergency-preparednes).

### 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](http://www.ilrc.org/step-step-family-preparedness-plan).

## Organizations

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### THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—IMMIGRANT SERVICES

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Telephone: 917.275.6975  
[www.nypl.org/immigrants](http://www.nypl.org/immigrants)

Offers a series of free programs and services related to work and life skills development, as well as cultural and recreational presentations through local partnerships, volunteers, and performers, for people of all ages. Services include English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, and free legal assistance and services for immigrants through partnerships with NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and Immigration Justice Corps Fellows. 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 [outreach@nypl.org](mailto:outreach@nypl.org) for more information about programs, requirements, and to make appointments.

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## **BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—IMMIGRANT SERVICES**

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**10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238**

**Telephone: 718.968.7275**

[www.bklynlibrary.org/learn/immigrants](http://www.bklynlibrary.org/learn/immigrants)

Offers free citizenship classes; call **718.230.2007** or email [immigrantservices@bklynlibrary.org](mailto: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 Immigrant Justice Corps (IJC). Full confidential screenings are provided to determine eligibility for immigration benefits, green card applications and renewals, TPS, naturalization, work permits, and referrals to trusted immigration specialists. Services are available in English, Spanish, and Kreyòl.

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## **QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—NEW AMERICANS PROGRAM**

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**89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432**

**Telephone: 718.990.0894**

[www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/new-americans](http://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. Provides ESOL classes at beginning, intermedi-

ate, and advanced levels as well as English conversation groups. Citizenship application or other immigration legal services (visas, green cards, etc.) are referred to other community based organizations. Visit the website or email [napref@queenslibrary.org](mailto:napref@queenslibrary.org) for more information.

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## US CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES—GREEN CARDS

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**Telephone: 800.375.5283 / TTY: 800.767.1833**

**Outside the United States or a US territory: 212.620.3418**

[www.uscis.gov/green-card](http://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.

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## NYS OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS (ONA)

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**New Americans Hotline: 800.566.7636**

[www.newamericans.ny.gov](http://www.newamericans.ny.gov)

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.

The Liberty Defense Project, administered by ONA, is run in partnership with law firms, legal associations, advocacy organizations, major colleges and universities, and bar associations. Provides free legal consultations and screenings for immigrants; direct representation to immigrants in deportation proceedings as well as other cases; help with filing immigration applications for naturalization, employment authorization, permanent residency, and more; and Know Your Rights training. Call the New Americans Hotline or

visit <https://dos.ny.gov/liberty-defense-project> for more information.

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## NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS— ACTIONNYC

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Telephone: 800.354.0365 or 311 and say “ActionNYC”  
[www1.nyc.gov/site/immigrants/help/legal-services/actionnyc.page](http://www1.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.

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## BRONXWORKS—IMMIGRATION SERVICES

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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 336](#).

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## BROOKLYN DEFENDER SERVICES (BDS)—IMMIGRATION PRACTICE

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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 180](#).

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**CABRINI IMMIGRANT SERVICES—NYC**

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**139 Henry Street, New York, NY 10002****Telephone: 212.791.4590 x100**[www.cis-nyc.org](http://www.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. Connects currently incarcerated people to appropriate resources. 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.

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**CAMBA—IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES**

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**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.

See the full listing for CAMBA on [page 120](#).

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## CATHOLIC CHARITIES—IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE SERVICES



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80 Maiden Lane, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10038

Telephone: 212.419.3700 / Immigration Hotline: 800.566.7636

[www.cccsny.org](http://www.cccsny.org)

Offers information and referrals as well as direct service for immigration-related problems. Provides services of accredited representatives who can appear before an immigration court on behalf of clients. Minimal fees are charged, but services are not withheld due to inability to pay. Call to schedule an appointment.

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## CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL

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150 Elizabeth Street, New York, NY 10012

Telephone: 212.941.0920

[www.cpc-nyc.org](http://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.

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## CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)—CITIZENSHIP NOW!



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Telephone: 646.664.9400

[www1.cuny.edu/sites/citizenship-now](http://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. Call to schedule an appointment.

See the full listing for CUNY on [page 74](#).

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## EMERALD ISLE IMMIGRATION CENTER (EIIC)

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[www.eiic.org](http://www.eiic.org)

**4275 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.

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## EMMA'S TORCH

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**345 Smith Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231**  
**Telephone: 718.243.1222**  
[www.emmastorch.org](http://www.emmastorch.org)

A 10-week paid apprenticeship program in culinary training for refugees, asylees, or survivors of human trafficking over the age of 18, 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 weekly evaluations to track progress and prepare for a long-term career. Spanish, French, Arabic, and Hebrew are also spoken. Visit the website for more information and application.

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## ENVISION FREEDOM FUND

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**195 Montague Street, 14th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201**  
**Hotline: 718.717.2007 (Tue and Thu 3pm–5pm)**  
[www.envisionfreedom.org](http://www.envisionfreedom.org)

Pays immigration bond to free people from ICE detention who are

unable to afford it, and provides post-release support for those bonded out including food, mental health, medical, and housing support. Never charges money, fees, or asks to be paid back for services provided. Also 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, and book requests. Staff members will contact the jail or ICE when needed to advocate on behalf of detained community members.

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**FAMILIES FOR FREEDOM (FFF)**  

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**35 West 31st Street, #702, New York, NY 10001**  
**Telephone: 646.290.8720 / Hotline: 646.290.5551**  
[www.familiesforfreedom.org](http://www.familiesforfreedom.org)

An advocacy organization fighting to end the continued detention and deportation of non-US Citizens, 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 a Speakers' Bureau, Member Leadership Development (MLP), Know Your Rights, Deportation 101, and more. Contact for more information.

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**FREEDOM FOR IMMIGRANTS**  

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**1322 Webster Street, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612**  
**Telephone: 510.822.2722**  
[www.freedomforimmigrants.org](http://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).

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## IMMIGRANT DEFENSE PROJECT



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**PO Box 1725, New York, NY 10027**

**Helpline: 212.725.6422**

[www.immigrantdefenseproject.org](http://www.immigrantdefenseproject.org)

Provides targeted litigation in support of challenges to deportations and other adverse immigration consequences based on criminal convictions and arrests. Other services include expert advice, legal training, and community defense work that builds the capacity of advocates and directly impacted individuals to respond to issues of immigrant criminalization. Also provides Know Your Rights flyers for encounters with ICE and resources for emergency planning.

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## IMMIGRATION ADVOCATES NETWORK (IAN)—NATIONAL IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES DIRECTORY



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[www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory](http://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.

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## IMMIGRATION EQUALITY



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**Telephone: 212.714.2904 (Wed 1pm–4pm)**

**From Detention: 917.654.9696 (Mon–Thu 9:30–5:30)**

[www.immigrationequality.org](http://www.immigrationequality.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.

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**INFORMED IMMIGRANT** 

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[www.informedimmigrant.com](http://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.

An updated resource guide for those impacted by COVID-19 is available at [www.informedimmigrant.com/guides/coronavirus](http://www.informedimmigrant.com/guides/coronavirus).

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**LEGAL AID SOCIETY**  

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**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 184](#).

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**MAKE THE ROAD NEW YORK**  

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[www.maketheroadny.org](http://www.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 support and activities for LGBTQI+ 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.

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## **MERCY CENTER—IMMIGRATION SERVICES**

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[www.mercycenterbronx.org](http://www.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, workforce development courses, and HSE classes in Spanish. Classes are virtual due to COVID-19.

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**MIXTECA ORGANIZATION INC.** 

**245 23rd Street, 2nd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11215**

**Telephone: 718.965.4795**

[www.mixteca.org](http://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, as well as and referrals to free and low-cost immigration, legal, and social services.

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**NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY** 

**170 Central Park West, New York, NY 10024**

**Telephone: 212.873.3400 x511**

[www.nyhistory.org/education/citizenship-project](http://www.nyhistory.org/education/citizenship-project)

Offers an online citizenship course to prepare permanent residents for the civics test portion of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) naturalization interview. Online citizenship classes are taught in English and are accessible to English Language Learners. Spanish citizenship class offered for people who qualify for the English language exemption. Must register in advance.

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**NEW WOMEN NEW YORKERS (NWNW)** 

[www.nywomenimmigrants.org](http://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.

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## **NORTHERN MANHATTAN COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS (NMCIR)**

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**5030 Broadway, Suite 639, New York, NY 10034**

**Telephone: 212.781.0355**

[www.nmcir.org](http://www.nmcir.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.

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## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW (OBT)— OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS**

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**Telephone: 718.387.1600**

Provides free services for the immigrant community of Bushwick and the surrounding area. Services include preparation classes for citizenship exams, ESOL classes, computer classes, and entrepreneurship training. Provides assistance with filing for naturalization, green card renewal, and certificate of citizenship. Must call to make an appointment, no walk-ins accepted.

See the full listing for OBT on [page 347](#).

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## **QUEER DETAINEE EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (QDEP)**

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**308 West 46th Street, New York, NY 10036**

**Hotline: 347.645.9339**

[www.qdep.org](http://www.qdep.org)

Works with LGBTQI+ 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. Assistance from the hotline is available Mon–Fri 10–5. Services are also available in French.

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**SAFE PASSAGE PROJECT** 

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**185 West Broadway, New York, NY 10013**  
**Telephone: 212.324.6558**  
[www.safepassageproject.org](http://www.safepassageproject.org)

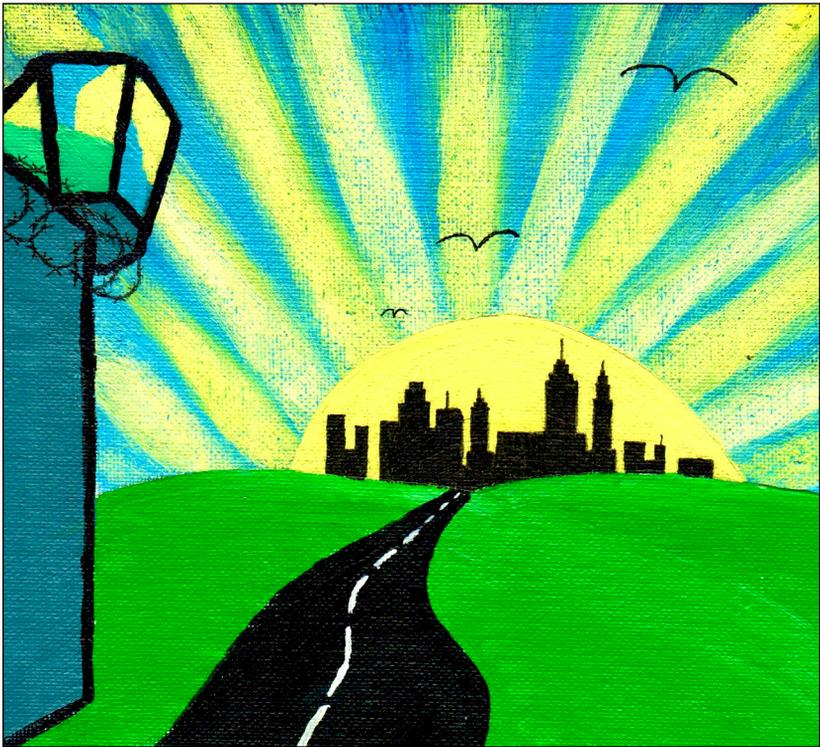
Offers help with the legal needs of indigent immigrant youth living in NYC. Provides representation for unaccompanied minors in immigration court and resources for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), asylum, as well as other possible immigration alternatives for children. The social work team assists with additional mental health and school-related support services. Call for an appointment, screening, or interview, as well as updated information on services.

# Veterans

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THAT YOU ARE HERE—THAT LIFE EXISTS, AND IDENTITY,  
THAT THE POWERFUL PLAY GOES ON, AND YOU MAY  
CONTRIBUTE A VERSE.

— WALT WHITMAN, *O ME! O LIFE!*



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY BLAZEJ KOT

# 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](http://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.

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## **STATESIDE LEGAL**

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[www.statesidelegal.org](http://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 that can help enforce legal rights and benefits.

## Organizations

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**US DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)** 



**VA Regional Benefits Office**

**245 West Houston Street, New York, NY 10014**

**Telephone: 800.827.1000 / TTY: 711**

**National Call Center for Homeless Veterans: 877.424.3838**

[www.va.gov](http://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 Veteran Rapid Retraining Assistance Program (VRRAP)** is for veterans who lost their job due to COVID-19. Eligible participants receive up to 12 months of tuition and fees and a monthly housing allowance based on Post-9/11 GI Bill rates. Covered education programs must provide training for high-demand occupations, which is determined by the Commissioner of Labor Statistics. GI Bill approved programs of education, excluding bachelor's and graduate degrees, and VET TEC approved training are eligible.

**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**

**32 Broadway, Suite 200, New York, NY 10004**  
**Telephone: 212.951.6866**

**75-10B 91st Avenue, Woodhaven, NY 11421**  
**Telephone: 718.296.2871**

**60 Bay Street, 1st Floor, Staten Island, NY 10301**  
**Telephone: 718.816.4499**

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**JAMES J. PETERS VA MEDICAL CENTER** 

**130 West Kingsbridge Road, Bronx, NY 10468**  
**Telephone: 718.584.9000 / Nurses Helpline: 800.877.6976**  
[www.bronx.va.gov](http://www.bronx.va.gov)

Provides comprehensive healthcare through primary care, tertiary care, 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.

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**NYS DIVISION OF VETERANS' SERVICES** 

**Hotline: 888.838.7697**  
[www.veterans.ny.gov](http://www.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 a website to schedule an appointment.

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**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](http://www.nyc.gov/vets)

Provides services and assistance to NYC veterans and their families including help with benefits, employment and entrepreneurship, housing support, physical and mental health, and education. Call or visit [www.nyc.uniteus.com/vetconnectnyc](http://www.nyc.uniteus.com/vetconnectnyc) to connect to services.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES— PRIORITY1

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**Telephone: 311**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/sbs/careers/veteran-services.page](http://www1.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 information on the Virtual Workforce1 Career Center System.

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## NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF THRIVENYC—MISSION: VET CHECK

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<https://thrivenyc.cityofnewyork.us/mission-vetcheck>

An initiative where volunteer veterans make supportive check-in calls to peers in their community, along with providing information about how to access vital public services, including free meals, COVID-19 test site locations, and mental health resources. Visit the website to request a check-in call through the online form.

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## BLACK VETERANS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, INC.

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**665 Willoughby Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11206**

**Telephone: 718.852.6004**

[www.bvsj.org](http://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.

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## CITY BAR JUSTICE CENTER—VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROJECT

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**42 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036**

**Telephone: 212.382.4722**

[www.citybarjusticecenter.org](http://www.citybarjusticecenter.org)

Provides disabled, low-income veterans in NYC with pro bono legal assistance on issues related to their claims for benefits from the VA. Veterans 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 file claims and appeals with the VA. Assistance ranges from locating service documents and medical records, to preparing and filing claims, and directly representing veterans at hearings.

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## CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (CUNY)—OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (COVA)

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**555 West 57th Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10019**

**Telephone: 646.664.8835**

[www.cuny.edu/about/university-resources/veterans-affairs](http://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. Call Mon–Thu 9–5.

See the full listing for CUNY on [page 74](#).

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## 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**

[www.iava.org](http://www.iava.org)

An advocacy and support organization for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and their families. The Quick Reaction Force provides free

and confidential peer support, remote care management, and connections to resources for veterans and family members including information and referrals on disability claims, education benefits, mental health, financial assistance, legal services, employment, housing services, and public benefits. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to speak with a Veteran Care Manager.

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## **NYU LANGONE MEDICAL CENTER—THE STEVEN A. COHEN MILITARY FAMILY CLINIC**

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**1 Park Avenue, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10016**

**Telephone: 855.698.4677**

[www.nyulangone.org/locations/military-family-clinic](http://www.nyulangone.org/locations/military-family-clinic)

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.

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## **PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA (PVA)**

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**Bronx National Service Office—James J. Peters VAMC**

**130 West Kingsbridge Road, Room 1D-52A, Bronx, NY 10468**

**Telephone: 718.584.9000 x6272 / Toll-free: 866.297.1319**

**TTY: 800.795.4327 / Benefits Hotline: 866.734.0857**

**Caregiver Support: 855.260.3274**

**National Headquarters: 800.424.8200**

[www.pva.org](http://www.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.

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## PROTECT OUR DEFENDERS

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**950 North Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314**  
[www.protectourdefenders.com/rights](http://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.

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## SERVICES FOR THE UNDERSERVED (S:US)—VETERAN SERVICES

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**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 142](#).

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## VETERANS CRISIS LINE

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**Hotline: 800.273.8255 (press 1)**  
[www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)

Connects veterans in crisis, and their families and friends, with qualified VA responders through a confidential 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.

# People with Disabilities

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MY DREAMS BELONG TO ME AND IN THEM, THERE IS JOY.

— CLIFTON BROWN III



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY ADAM ROBERTS

**NEW YORK RELAY CENTER** 

**Telephone: 711**

[www.nyrelay.com](http://www.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 the calls. All calls are completely confidential.

## **Rights While Incarcerated**

The following is from the ADA National Network's fact sheet found online at [www.adata.org/factsheet/corrections](http://www.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 207](#) for information on filing a grievance.

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## ADA NATIONAL NETWORK—NORTHEAST ADA CENTER



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**K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute on Employment and Disability**

**Cornell University: ILR School  
201 Dolgen Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853  
Telephone: 800.949.4232**

[www.adata.org](http://www.adata.org)

The regional center in charge of NYS. Provides information, training, and guidance on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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## DISABILITY RIGHTS NEW YORK

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**25 Chapel Street, Suite 1005, Brooklyn, NY 11201  
Telephone: 518.432.7861 / Toll-free: 800.993.8982  
TTY: 518.512.3448**

[www.drny.org](http://www.drny.org)

Provides free civil legal assistance to individuals with disabilities,

including individuals in state prisons and local jails. Assistance is limited to disability related matters within agency resources.

## Organizations

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### THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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[www.nypl.org/locations/map](http://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](mailto:accessibility@nypl.org) at least two weeks ahead of time to request accommodations.

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### THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—ANDREW HEISKELL BRAILLE AND TALKING BOOK LIBRARY

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40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 917.275.6975

[www.nypl.org/locations/heiskell](http://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, email [talkingbooks@nypl.org](mailto:talkingbooks@nypl.org), or go to [talkingbooks.nypl.org](http://talkingbooks.nypl.org) for more information.

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## NYS COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND (NYSCB)

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**Telephone: 866.871.3000**

[www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cbvh](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cbvh)

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 locations.

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## NYS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—ADULT CAREER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES—VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (ACCES–VR)

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**89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234**

**Telephone: 800.222.5627**

[www.acces.nysed.gov/vr](http://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 residents: 718.816.4800**

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## NYS OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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**44 Holland Avenue, Albany, NY 12229**

**Telephone: 866.946.9733**

[www.opwdd.ny.gov](http://www.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 a local office for information on referral services.

**Bronx: 718.430.0757**

**Brooklyn: 718.642.8576**

**Manhattan: 646.766.3220**

**Queens: 718.217.6485**

**Staten Island: 718.982.1913**

### **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 [www.opwdd.ny.gov/form/i-dd-id-cards](http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/form/i-dd-id-cards) to request an ID card.

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## **NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION—PARKING PERMITS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

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**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](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/pppinfo.shtml)

Call for updated information on obtaining a special parking permit for physically disabled residents and extended expiration dates.

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## **NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

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**100 Gold Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10038**

**Telephone: 311 / Video Phone: 646.396.5830**

[www.nyc.gov/mopd](http://www.nyc.gov/mopd)

Offers information and referrals in the areas of housing, transportation, discrimination, education, health, Social Security, and services to the homebound. Other languages are also spoken.

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## **NYC TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION—ACCESSIBILITY DISPATCH PROGRAM**

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**Telephone: 311 / Dispatch: 646.599.9999**

[www.accessibledispatch.com](http://www.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. To book a taxi, call, visit the website, or download the Accessible Dispatch mobile app.

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## **CENTER FOR HEARING AND COMMUNICATION**

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**50 Broadway, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10004**

**Telephone: 917.305.7700 / TTY: 917.305.7999**

[www.chchearing.org](http://www.chchearing.org)

### **Appointment Numbers**

**Audiology: 917.305.7766 / Speech and Language: 917.305.7840**

**Psychotherapy: 917.305.7739**

Offers a comprehensive program of rehabilitative and human services for those who are deaf or hard of hearing including free hearing screening, 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 also available. Contact for an appointment. Telehealth services are available.

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## **THE DEAF HOTLINE**

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**Videophone: 855.812.1001**

[www.thedeafhotline.org](http://www.thedeafhotline.org)

Provides safe, confidential support for the Deaf community nationwide, offering advocacy and information regarding domestic violence and sexual assault 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Also

provides resources and education about the need for Deaf abuse outreach programs.

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## **FEDCAP**

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[www.fedcap.org](http://www.fedcap.org)

### **Headquarters**

**633 3rd Avenue, New York, NY 10017**

**Telephone: 212.727.4200**

### **Vocational Rehabilitation**

**210 East 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017**

**Telephone: 212.727.4327**

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 and Physically Handicapped, or the Department of Veterans Affairs. Provides business solutions, educational services, occupational health services, and home health services.

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## **HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (HLAA)—NYC CHAPTER**

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**PO Box 602, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10101**

**Telephone: 212.769.4327**

[www.hearinglossnyc.org](http://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.

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## INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS (ILCS)

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Nonprofit community-based, independent nonprofit organizations run by and for individuals with disabilities in New York City. Provides services that help those with disabilities lead independent, productive, and meaningful lives. 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.

**Bronx Independent Living Services, Inc.**  
**4419 3rd Avenue, Suite 2C, Bronx, NY 10457**  
**Telephone: 718.515.2800 / TTY: 718.515.2803**  
**Videophone: 866.426.8059**  
[www.bils.org](http://www.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](http://www.bcid.org)

**Manhattan Center for Independence of the Disabled NY**  
**841 Broadway, Suite 301, New York, NY 10003**  
**Telephone: 212.674.2300 / Videophone: 646.350.2681**  
[www.cidny.org](http://www.cidny.org)

**Harlem Independent Living Center**  
**289 St. Nicholas Avenue, Suite 21, Lower Level, New York, NY 10027**  
**Toll-free: 800.673.2371 / Telephone: 212.222.7122**  
**TTY: 212.222.7198 / Videophone: 646.755.3092**  
**Relay: 866.326.5892**  
<https://hilc.org>

**Queens Center for Independence of the Disabled NY**  
**80-02 Kew Gardens Road, Suite 400, Kew Gardens, NY 11415**  
**Telephone: 646.442.1520 / Videophone: 646.846.6875**  
[www.cidny.org](http://www.cidny.org)

Staten Island Center for Independent Living  
470 Castleton Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301  
Telephone: 718.720.9016 / TTY: 718.720.9870  
[www.siciliving.org](http://www.siciliving.org)

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## INSTITUTE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT (ICD)

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123 William Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10038  
Telephone: 212.585.6000  
[www.icdnyc.org](http://www.icdnyc.org)

Provides services to individuals with disabilities. Vocational training programs include building-repair technician, custodial services, information technology, office technology, veterinary assistant, human services, and early child development. 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.

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## JOB PATH, INC.

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256 West 38th Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10018  
Telephone: 212.944.0564  
[www.jobpathnyc.org](http://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.

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## LIGHTHOUSE GUILD VISION PLUS HEALTH

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250 West 64th Street, New York, NY 10023  
Telephone: 800.284.4422 / TTY: 711  
[www.lighthouseguild.org](http://www.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. Russian and Chinese are also spoken. Adult Tele-Support Groups meet by phone or online every other week and are led by a licensed professional to offer support on coping with COVID-19 and vision loss, and help finding resources. Contact for more information.

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## **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)**

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**Telephone: 511 / TTY: 711**  
**Access-A-Ride: 877.337.2017**  
[www.mta.info](http://www.mta.info)

Offers fare discounts for seniors and 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.

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## **NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)— SOCIAL SECURITY SDNY PROJECT**

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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 187](#).

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**VISIONS**



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**Telephone: 888.245.8333**

[www.visionsvcb.org](http://www.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

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TO BEGIN BY ALWAYS THINKING OF LOVE AS AN ACTION RATHER THAN A FEELING IS ONE WAY IN WHICH ANYONE USING THE WORD IN THIS MANNER AUTOMATICALLY ASSUMES ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY.

— bell hooks, *ALL ABOUT LOVE*



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY LUIS DEJESUS

# Organizations

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**ACLU—REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM PROJECT** 

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**125 Broad Street, 18th Floor, New York, NY 10004**

**Telephone: 212.549.2500**

[www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/prisoners-rights/#im-pregnant-and-in-prison](http://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/prisoners-rights/#im-pregnant-and-in-prison)

The Reproductive Freedom Project advocates for pregnant people who are incarcerated 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 who 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 207](#).

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

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## A BEAUTIFUL HEART MINISTRIES

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**115-36 199 Street, Jamaica, NY 11412**

**Telephone: 516.601.3390**

[www.abeautifulheartministries.org](http://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. 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.

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## CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES (CCA)— CROSSROADS FOR WOMEN

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A substance use disorder treatment program offered as an alternative to incarceration for women ages 18 and over.

See the full listing for CCA on [page 47](#).

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## EDWIN GOULD SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES— STEPS TO END FAMILY VIOLENCE

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

**Phone: 212.437.3500 / Helpline: 877.783.7794**

[www.egscf.org](http://www.egscf.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 criminal-

ized for their efforts to survive or resist abusive partner behavior. Contact for updates on services and other locations.

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**ACACIA NETWORK—GREENHOPE SERVICES FOR WOMEN, INC.**   

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**435 East 119th Street, New York, NY 10035**  
**Telephone: 212.360.4002**  
[www.acacianetwork.org](http://www.acacianetwork.org)

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.

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**HOUR CHILDREN**  

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

See the full listing for Hour Children on [page 315](#).

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**THE LADIES OF HOPE MINISTRIES (THE LOHM)**

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**8 West 126th Street, New York, NY 10027**  
[www.thelohm.org](http://www.thelohm.org)

Runs Hope House, a safe housing space for formerly incarcerated women and girls, located in the Bronx. The Angel Foods Project delivers free healthy food to formerly incarcerated women and their families and the families of incarcerated women. 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 aims to empower women and nonbinary indi-

viduals 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 to deepen and broaden the public conversation, empower formerly incarcerated women, and provide income for women as they speak around the country.

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## PROVIDENCE HOUSE

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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 99](#).

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## REENTRY ROCKS

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**36-46 37th Street, Long Island City, NY 11101**

**Telephone: 718.913.1885**

[www.reentryrocks.org](http://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, anger management support, 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.

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**WOMEN'S PRISON ASSOCIATION (WPA)**

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Provides a range of services for women, and their families, who have been impacted by the criminal legal system.

See the full listing for WPA on [page 57](#).

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**NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC) PROGRAM**

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**Telephone: 800.522.5006**

[www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/wic](http://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.

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**NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE—FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS (FJCS)**

WOMEN

268 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 FJCs on [page 319](#).

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**THE BOWERY MISSION—WOMEN'S CENTERS**

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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 100](#).

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## BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER DETECTION

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**Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center**

**Telephone: 212.639.2000**

**Central Scheduling: 646.227.3700 (screening services)**

**Physician Breast Service Appointments: 800.525.2225**

[www.mskcc.org](http://www.mskcc.org)

**Breast Examination Center of Harlem**

**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.

**Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Center**

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

**Telephone: 646.888.5200**

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

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## CRIME VICTIMS TREATMENT CENTER (CVTC)

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Provides medical, legal, and psychological support for survivors of sexual assault and interpersonal violence.

See the full listing for CVTC on [page 145](#).

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## FELICITY HOUSE

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**25 East 22nd Street, New York, NY 10010**

**Telephone: 646.362.0003**

[www.felicity-house.org](http://www.felicity-house.org)

A community center for women ages 18 and over with a professional diagnosis of autism. Offers opportunities to be social and part of a community around other women with autism in a safe

space through a range of programming including workshops, lectures and performances, activities, and more. Call or visit the website for a schedule of programming.

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## GRACE INSTITUTE

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40 Rector Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10006  
Telephone: 212.832.7605  
[www.graceinstitute.org](http://www.graceinstitute.org)

Offers tuition-free job-skills training for women in administrative fields. Provides job placement and job retention support for low-income women. Visit the website to find more information on requirements and application process.

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## HOT BREAD KITCHEN

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Offers programs and services for women, immigrants, and people 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 346](#).

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## NONTRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN (NEW)

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An employment and training program for women interested in construction, utility, and maintenance trades.

See the full listing for NEW on [page 347](#).

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## PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF GREATER NEW YORK

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Telephone: 800.230.7526  
[www.ppgreaterny.org](http://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 telehealth services.

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## QUEENS COLLEGE—WOMEN AND WORK PROGRAM

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A 14-week program to help prepare women to enter or reenter the workplace.

See the full listing for the Women and Work Program on [page 348](#).

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## SAFE HORIZON

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**2 Lafayette Street, #3, New York, NY 10007**

**Telephone: 212.577.7700**

[www.safehorizon.org](http://www.safehorizon.org)

**Domestic Violence Hotline: 800.621.4673**

**Rape and Sexual Assault Hotline: 212.227.3000**

**Crime Victims: 855.243.1042**

Offer 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.

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## SAKHI FOR SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN

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**PO Box 1333, Church Street Station, New York, NY 10008**

**Telephone: 212.714.9153 / Helpline: 212.868.6741**

[www.sakhi.org](http://www.sakhi.org)

An organization fighting for the end of violence against South

Asian or South Asian identifying women. Provides services including crisis response, safety planning, ongoing emotional support, weekly support groups, public benefits, accompaniments, and translation assistance. Provides advocacy in court, during health-care visits, and at public benefits and welfare agencies. Also offers immigration and civic engagement services, and youth empowerment programs. Provides assistance in South Asian languages such as Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, and Malayalam.

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## WIN NYC

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Provides shelter and supportive services for women with children.

See the full listing for Win NYC on [page 322](#).

## Helplines

### AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY—NEW YORK

Helpline: 800.227.2345

[www.cancer.org/about-us/local/new-york.html](http://www.cancer.org/about-us/local/new-york.html)

Provides help with any patient services, resource requests, or cancer, including breast cancer, information questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### THE GROWING UP HEALTHY HOTLINE

Telephone: 800.522.5006

[www.health.ny.gov/community/pregnancy/health\\_care/prenatal/guh.htm](http://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 5, 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](http://www.thehotline.org)

Provides free and confidential advocacy and information regard-

ing domestic violence and sexual assault 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**SEX CRIMES REPORT LINE** 

**Telephone: 212.335.9373**

[www.manhattanda.org/victim-resources/sex-crimes](http://www.manhattanda.org/victim-resources/sex-crimes)

Staffed by specially trained detectives who take police reports over the phone, conduct investigations, and provide information and referrals. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**STRONGHEARTS NATIVE HELPLINE**

**Helpline: 844.762.8483**

[www.strongheartshelpline.org](http://www.strongheartshelpline.org)

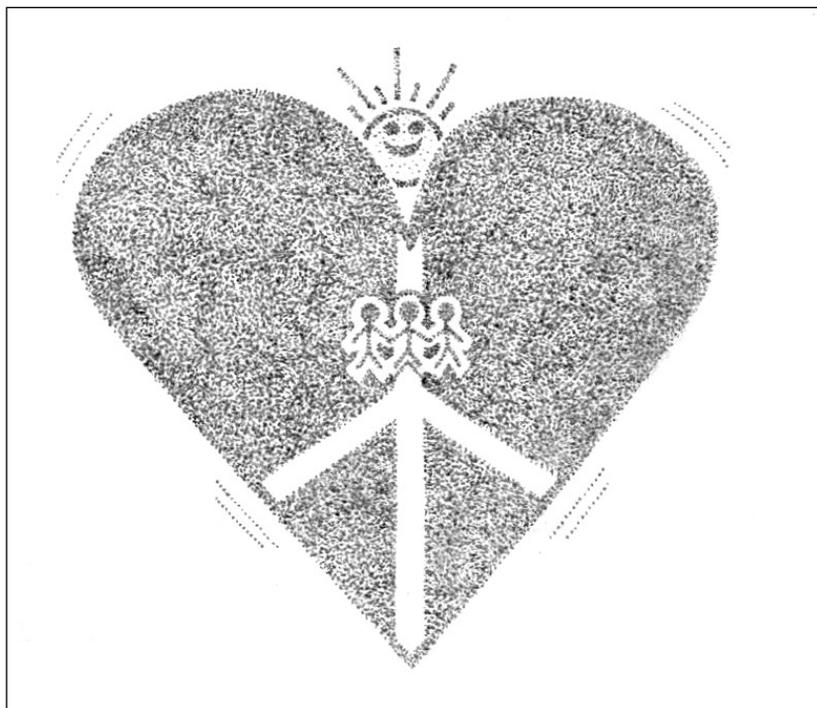
A safe, anonymous, and confidential domestic violence and dating violence helpline for Native Americans and Alaska Natives, offering culturally-appropriate support and advocacy. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

# Older People

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I DO NOT APOLOGISE FOR LIVING LONG. HIGH ON THE RAMPARTS OF THIS BLISTERING HELL OF LIFE, I SIT AND SEE THE TRUTH. I LOOK IT FULL IN THE FACE, AND I WILL NOT LIE ABOUT IT, NEITHER TO MYSELF NOR TO THE WORLD.

— W.E.B. DU BOIS



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ARTWORK BY JAMES MATTHEW RUIZ

# Organizations

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## OSBORNE ASSOCIATION—ELDER REENTRY INITIATIVE PROJECT (ERI)

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Care managers and mentors work with older adults, age 50 or older, to create individualized, age-appropriate discharge and care management service plans. Upon release, each participant is supported throughout the process of securing services and receives follow-up services. Services include financial assistance, benefits and entitlements, employment training and opportunities, medical services, home-delivered meals, appropriate housing placement, elder abuse and crime victims services, legal services, services for LGBTQI+ seniors, services for veterans, vision rehabilitation and hearing loss services, and local senior centers memberships.

See the full listing for Osborne Association on [page 55](#).

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## BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—SERVICES FOR OLDER ADULTS

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10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Telephone: 718.236.1760

[www.bklynlibrary.org/seniors](http://www.bklynlibrary.org/seniors)

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.

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## **NYS OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES— ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS)**

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**Telephone: 844.697.3505**

[www.ocfs.ny.gov/main/psa](http://www.ocfs.ny.gov/main/psa)

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.

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## **NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

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Contact to file a complaint for discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on age, race, color, religion/creed, natural hair or hairstyles, 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 211](#).

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## **NYC DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING (DFTA)**

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**2 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10007**

**Ageing Connect: 212.244.6469 or 311**

[www.nyc.gov/aging](http://www.nyc.gov/aging)

Partners with hundreds of community-based organizations to provide services through senior centers, which offer 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.

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## **NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE— FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS (FJCS)**

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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 FJCs on [page 319](#).

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## **CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL—SENIOR SERVICES**

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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 232](#).

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## **DOROT**

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**171 West 85th Street, New York, NY 10024**  
**Telephone: 212.769.2850**

[www.dorotusa.org](http://www.dorotusa.org)

The University Without Walls program offers hundreds of tele-conference programs, appealing to a wide range of interests via telephone. Support groups enable older adults to connect with peers over common experiences including vision loss and coping with the loss of a loved one. Class size is limited to encourage discussion. The Caring Calls program matches seniors with volunteers for social connections by phone once or twice a week.

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## **METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)— REDUCED-FARE METROCARD**

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**Telephone: 511 / TTY: 711**

<https://new.mta.info/fares/reduced-fare>

Offers fare discounts for people ages 65 and over and people with disabilities. Call or visit the website for more information and application instructions.

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## **NYC-ARTS—CULTURAL GUIDE FOR SENIORS**

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[www.nyc-arts.org](http://www.nyc-arts.org)

Provides details on programs for senior citizens, 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.

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## **RESERVE**

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**Telephone: 877.290.6145**

[www.reserveinc.org](http://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.

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## SENIOR PLANET—OLDER ADULTS TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (OATS)

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National Tech Hotline: 888.713.3495 / NYC Hotline: 917.936.4410  
[www.seniorplanet.org](http://www.seniorplanet.org)

Helps older people access technology through online 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.

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## SERVICES AND ADVOCACY FOR LGBT ELDERS (SAGE)

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Provides crisis intervention, support groups to LGBTQI+ people, and individual, homebound, family, and group counseling to people ages 60 and over and their caregivers.

See the full listing for SAGE on [page 289](#).

# Medical Care

*A Complete Guide to Health Insurance Coverage for Older New Yorkers* can be found online at [www1.nyc.gov/site/dfta/services/health-insurance-assistance.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dfta/services/health-insurance-assistance.page).

### MEDICARE <sup>(ES)</sup>

Telephone: 800.633.4227 / TTY: 877.486.2048

[www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)

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

### ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE (EPIC) <sup>(ES)</sup>

Telephone: 800.332.3742 / TTY: 800.290.9138

[www.health.ny.gov/health\\_care/epic](http://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 97](#). The Doe Fund, The Fortune Society, Greenhope, Hour Children, Providence House, and the Women's Prison Association all provide housing for older people.

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### NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)—FAMILY REENTRY PROGRAM



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**Telephone: 212.306.6024**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/residents/family-partnerships.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/residents/family-partnerships.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.

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### CENTERS HEALTHCARE



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**4770 White Plains Road, Bronx, NY 10470**

**Telephone: 718.931.9700**

[www.centershealthcare.com](http://www.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+

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HOW FAST IS YOUR ALIVE? HOW SMOOTH IS YOUR ALIVE?  
HOW HARD, HOW RESILIENT? WE'RE ALIVE BECAUSE WE  
CAN BE HURT; WE'RE ALIVE BECAUSE WE CAN HEAL. I  
THINK IT'S BEAUTIFUL. IT'S WHY I FIGHT.

— AKWAEKE EMEZI, *PET*



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ARTWORK BY HECTOR MANUEL RODRIGUEZ



# 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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/media/pride.page](http://www1.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 183](#)) also provides Know Your Rights resources on their website at [www.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights](http://www.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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page](http://www1.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 167](#).

## 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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/lgbtq.page](http://www1.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 use the online form at [www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/about/report-discrimination.page).

The **NYC Health Map** is a directory of 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

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## NYC COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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Contact to file a complaint for discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations based on age, race, color, religion/creed, natural hair or hairstyles, 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 211](#).

## NYC COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE—LGBTQ+ GUIDE

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1 Centre Street, New York, NY 10007

Telephone: 212.669.3916

[www.comptroller.nyc.gov/services/for-the-public/lgbtq-guide/overview](http://www.comptroller.nyc.gov/services/for-the-public/lgbtq-guide/overview)

A directory of LGBTQ+ organizations and programs available in NYC. Contains over 500 listings with descriptions and contact information. Contact for a printed copy.

## ALI FORNEY CENTER (AFC)

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Provides emergency housing and services to LGBTQI+ youth ages 16–24 experiencing homelessness.

See the full listing for Ali Forney Center on [page 307](#).

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**ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)**

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**116 Nassau Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10038****Telephone: 212.714.1184 / Hotline: 212.714.1141****TTY: 212.714.1134**[www.avp.org](http://www.avp.org)

Offers free and confidential support services to the LGBTQI+ community and people living with HIV who are survivors of bias violence, intimate-partner violence, pickup violence, police misconduct, HIV-related violence, rape, and sexual violence. Provides accompaniment to police, court, medical, or social service agencies. Economic empowerment counseling, legal services, and individual and group counseling is available. The crisis hotline offers 24-hour assistance from counselors and trained volunteers.

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**BLACK & PINK**

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**6223 Maple Street, PO Box 4600, Omaha, NE 68104**[www.blackandpink.org](http://www.blackandpink.org)

A national organization that provides advocacy, support, and direct services to currently and formerly incarcerated LGBTQIA2S+ people and people living with HIV/AIDS. Services to incarcerated members include pen-pal services and a newsletter.

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**CALLEN-LORDE HEALTH CENTER**

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**Telephone: 212.271.7200**[www.callen-lorde.org](http://www.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 primary care, HIV care, women's healthcare, adolescent healthcare, transgender healthcare including hormone therapy, mental healthcare, care coordination, dental services, and sexual health services. Call before visiting and for information on current services and locations. For pharmacy services, use the online form or call **877.436.3452**.

The TransAtlas, available at [www.transatlas.callen-lorde.org](http://www.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.

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## **CENTER FOR ANTI-VIOLENCE EDUCATION**

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

**Telephone: 718.788.1775**

[www.caeny.org](http://www.caeny.org)

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.

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## **DESTINATION TOMORROW**

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**452 East 149th Street, Suite 3, Bronx, NY 10455**

**Telephone: 646.723.3325**

[www.destinationtomorrow.org](http://www.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.

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## HETRICK-MARTIN INSTITUTE (HMI)

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Provides free year-round programs and services for LGBTQI+ youth ages 13–24 and their families in NYC.

See the full listing for HMI on [page 309](#).

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## IDENTITY HOUSE

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[www.identityhouse.org](http://www.identityhouse.org)

Provides peer-counseling, resources, and referrals to support LGBTQI+ adults who are working through issues related to sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression. Visit the website for more information and to schedule an appointment. Virtual walk-in sessions are available.

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## LAMBDA LEGAL

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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 183](#).

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## LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY CENTER (THE CENTER)

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208 West 13th Street, New York, NY 10011

Telephone: 212.620.7310

[www.gaycenter.org](http://www.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.

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## **LGBT BAR ASSOCIATION OF GREATER NEW YORK (LEGAL)**

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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 186](#).

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## **NATIONAL CENTER FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS (NCLR)**

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### **National Headquarters**

**870 Market Street, Suite 370, San Francisco, CA 94102**

**Telephone: 415.392.6257 / Legal Helpline: 800.528.6257**

[www.nclrights.org](http://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.

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## **NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS—LGBTQ HEALTH CARE SERVICES**

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**Pride Health Centers COVID-19 Line: 212.925.5000**

**Telephone: 212.423.7292**

[www.nychealthandhospitals.org/services/lgbtq-health-care-services](http://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/services/lgbtq-health-care-services)

Mandates LGBTQ training for all staff. Offers a variety of services through Pride Health Centers including services for women's health; men's health; gender transition; hormone therapy; HIV and STD prevention, screening, and treatment services; adolescent care; social work and behavioral health services; and general primary care. The website also provides patient information and

resources for healthcare centers and providers. Contact for information on services and locations.

For urgent sexual or reproductive services, LGBTQ affirming care, or mental health support call the COVID-19 line and press 3 after the language prompt to speak with a nurse. Initial screenings are all done over the phone.

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## QUEER DETAINEE EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (QDEP)



Works with LGBTQI+ 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 239](#).

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## SERVICES AND ADVOCACY FOR LGBT ELDERS (SAGE)

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**305 7th Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001**  
**Telephone: 212.741.2247 / Hotline: 877.360.5428**  
[www.sageusa.org](http://www.sageusa.org)

Provides crisis intervention, support groups to LGBTQI+ people, and individual, homebound, family, and group counseling to people ages 60 and over and their caregivers. The hotline provides 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 Center Bronx at Crotona Pride House**  
**1784 Prospect Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457**  
**Telephone: 718.960.3337**

**SAGE-GRIOT/Brooklyn**  
**25 Flatbush Avenue, 5th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11217**  
**Telephone: 718.246.2775**

**Sage Center Brooklyn at Stonewall House**  
271 Myrtle Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11201  
Telephone: 212.741.2247

**SAGE Center Harlem**  
220 West 143rd Street, New York, NY 10030  
Telephone: 646.660.8951

**Eddie Windsor SAGE Center**  
305 7th Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001  
Telephone: 646.576.8669

**SAGE-Pride Center of Staten Island**  
25 Victory Blvd., 3rd Floor, Staten Island, NY 10301  
Telephone: 718.808.1365

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**STONEWALL COMMUNITY FOUNDATION** 

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**1270 Broadway, Suite 501, New York, NY, 10001**  
Telephone: 212.457.1341  
[www.stonewallfoundation.org](http://www.stonewallfoundation.org)

Offers grants to US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofits that serve the LGBTQI+ community. Microgrants, ranging from \$25–\$650, are offered to LGBTQI+ women and nonbinary individuals who have an express need for support. Scholarships are also available to LGBTQI+ individuals, refugees, or asylum seekers for opportunities and access to education in NYC. Visit the website for the requirements needed to apply for grants and scholarships.

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**SYLVIA RIVERA LAW PROJECT**  

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**147 West 24th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10011**  
Telephone: 212.337.8550  
[www.srlp.org](http://www.srlp.org)

Provides free legal services 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. Legal services include name changes, healthcare,

ID updates, rights information for currently incarcerated people, immigration assistance, and more. 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](mailto:info@srlp.org) for eligibility information and to make an appointment.

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## TRANS LIFELINE

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**195 41st Street, #11253, Oakland, CA 94611**  
**Telephone: 510.771.1417 / Hotline: 877.565.8860**  
[www.translifeline.org](http://www.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 microgrants program can help people with changing their legal name and updating government identification documents. Visit the website for an application.

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## TRANSGENDER LAW CENTER (TLC)

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**PO Box 70976, Oakland, CA 94612**  
**Telephone: 510.587.9696 / Collect: 510.380.8229**  
[www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org)

A national trans-led organization advocating self-determination for all people, grounded in legal expertise and committed to racial justice. The Detention Project works to end the abuses transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) people experience in prisons, jails, immigration detention, state hospitals, other forms of detention, and at the hands of law enforcement.

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## TRANSGENDER LEGAL DEFENSE & EDUCATION FUND

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**520 8th Avenue, Suite 2204, New York, NY 10018**  
**Telephone: 646.862.9396**

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 health care needed. The website provides resources and tools, including an insurance tutorial. Visit the website for more information on eligibility and intake form.

## Rights for Incarcerated Transgender, Intersex, & Gender Nonconforming People

In 2018 the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) rolled back policies intended to protect transgender people, and at the time of publication for this book the policy had not been changed. According to the BOP's "Transgender Offender Manual," prison staff are directed to use an incarcerated person's sex assigned at birth as the determination for housing, rather than their gender. Additionally, 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 207](#).

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/#im-experiencing-discrimination-or-abuse-in-prison-because-im-transgender](http://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/prisoners-rights/#im-experiencing-discrimination-or-abuse-in-prison-because-im-transgender).

Or reach out to:

**ACLU National Prison Project**  
**915 15th Street NW, 7th Floor**  
**Washington, DC 20005**  
**Telephone: 212.549.2500**

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. Remember that 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 deci-

sions 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.

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 213](#).

# Youth

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IN THE WORLD THROUGH WHICH I TRAVEL, I AM  
ENDLESSLY CREATING MYSELF.

— FRANTZ FANON



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY NELSON VASQUEZ



# 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](http://www.ny.gov/programs/raise-age-0).

## 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

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## ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN (AFC)

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**151 West 30th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10001**

**Telephone: 212.947.9779 / Helpline: 866.427.6033**

[www.advocatesforchildren.org](http://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  
298 Free workshops and trainings, as well as guidebooks and other informational resources for parents, youth, and social service providers are offered. Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, and Haitian-Creole are spoken with the capacity to serve speakers of other languages via Language Line. Call the helpline Mon–Thu 10–4. No walk-ins.

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## THE ANIMATION PROJECT (TAP)

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**413 West 14th Street, Suite 200, New York, NY 10014**

**Telephone: 212.227.7755**

[www.theanimationproject.org](http://www.theanimationproject.org)

A therapeutic workforce development program that teaches animation skills to low-income NYC youth ages 12–24.

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## AVENUES FOR JUSTICE (AFJ)—ANDREW GLOVER YOUTH PROGRAM

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100 Centre Street, Room 1541, New York, NY 10013

Telephone: 212.349.6381

[www.agyp.org](http://www.agyp.org)

A supervised alternative-to-incarceration program for court-involved youth in Manhattan. Provides supervision, education and mentorship, counseling referrals, job training, and offers court advocacy.

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## BRONXCONNECT

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432 East 149th Street, 2nd Floor, Bronx, NY 10455

Telephone: 718.402.6872

[www.bronxconnect.org](http://www.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. Offers a Misdemeanor Program with employment-focused alternatives-to-incarceration for youth ages 24 and under facing 6–12 months in Rikers Island.

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## CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (CASES)—YOUTH SERVICES

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

Telephone: 212.553.6300

[www.cases.org/youth](http://www.cases.org/youth)

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 referral information. Telehealth services available at the mental health clinic in Central Harlem.

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**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES (CCA)—YOUTH SERVICES NYC**  

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**25 Chapel Street, 7th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201**  
**Telephone: 718.858.9658**  
[www.communityalternatives.org](http://www.communityalternatives.org)

Provides services to court-involved youth including intensive community-based supervision, individual case management, educational and vocational counseling, life-skills groups, after-school arts enrichment, volunteer work in the community, and referrals to community-based services including tutoring. Family Court-involved youth through age 15 are eligible if they face a pending delinquency case or if they are at risk of placement through the Office of Children and Family Services. Young people in the adult criminal court system are eligible if they are indicted in the Supreme Court as an adult or adjudicated on a delinquency matter, and detained at a juvenile facility. Referrals are initiated by legal guardians, defense counsel, and the courts.

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**THE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE**   

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[www.childrensvillage.org](http://www.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, and daycare to children and teens. The Arches program provides a mutual aid support system, education and employment support, and creative therapeutic techniques to Bronx-area young adults ages 16–24 on probation. Next S.T.E.P.S. (Striving Towards Engagement & Peaceful Solutions) is an 11-month community program that works to decrease the number of violent crimes and incarcerations in Harlem. The Bravehearts program offers weekly support meetings and mentoring for young adults who have been in foster care, were homeless, or were incarcerated. The Bravery Behind Bars program provides similar support to currently incarcerated young adults.

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## **ELITE LEARNERS—REENTRY SERVICES**

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**Telephone: 347.221.0188**  
[www.elitelearners.org](http://www.elitelearners.org)

**45 Belmont Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11212**

**4517 Avenue D, Brooklyn, NY 11203**

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 skills building, job placement, workshop training such as computer literacy, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, housing connections, mental health counseling, and more. Also provides referrals where necessary for court advocacy and support services.

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**EXALT YOUTH** 

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**17 Battery Place, Suite 307, New York, NY 10004**  
**Telephone: 347.621.6100 x110**  
[www.exaltyouth.org](http://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), 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.

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**EXODUS TRANSITIONAL COMMUNITY—YOUTH EMPOWERMENT**   

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**2268 3rd Avenue, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10035**  
**Telephone: 917.492.0990**  
[www.etcny.org](http://www.etcny.org)

Provides assistance with employment, housing, food, hygiene items, clothing, emergency assistance and support, substance use or mental health treatment, and medical care. Contact for operating hours and information on mentoring and peer support programs, case management, access to in-house substance use services and mental health referrals, job and paid internship readiness training and placement, and court advocacy.

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**GETTING OUT AND STAYING OUT (GOSO)**   

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**201A East 124th Street, New York, NY 10035**  
**Telephone: 212.831.5020**  
[www.gosonyc.org](http://www.gosonyc.org)

A reentry program for men 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, 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.

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## **GIRL VOW, INC.**

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**509 Willis Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455**

**Telephone: 347.918.8723**

[www.girlvow.org](http://www.girlvow.org)

A mentoring program for all girls who identify as part of the LGBTQI+ community and are court-involved or in foster care. Connects participants to mentoring services, youth development workshops, and life-skills training, including career planning and academic planning. Services also include crisis intervention, leadership training, and advocacy and support. Visit the website for self-referrals.

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## **HOW OUR LIVES LINK ALTOGETHER (H.O.L.L.A!)**

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**510 Gates Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221**

**Telephone: 347.575.6900**

[www.holla-inc.com](http://www.holla-inc.com)

Conducts youth organizing training programs designed to build capacity for critical social analysis and community organizing. Programming includes political education, intersectional healing, community organizing skill-building, keynote speeches and stakeholder briefings with policymakers, and trips to colleges and universities.



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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 55](#).

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**POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE (PAL)—JUVENILE JUSTICE**

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[www.palnyc.org](http://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 the Youth Link Program that provides court-involved and underserved youth ages 12–17 with counseling, group workshops, tutoring, educational trips, mentoring, sports and recreation, paid internship opportunities, and more.

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**POSSIBILITY PROJECT—YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAM**

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**104 West 27th Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10001**  
**Telephone: 212.924.2300**

[www.the-possibility-project.org](http://www.the-possibility-project.org)

A virtual performing and digital arts program, with occasional outdoor in-person meetups, open to NYC youth ages 15–21 who are or have been involved in the legal system. Participants meet on Mondays and Wednesdays during after-school hours from June through December. Recruitment occurs in May and June with rolling admission throughout the program. Visit the website for information on how to schedule a meeting.

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## YOUTH JUSTICE NETWORK



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[www.youthjustice.org](http://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**

### **Queens Office**

**161-10 Jamaica Avenue, #417, Jamaica, NY 11432**

**Telephone: 718.739.2999**

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.

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**YOUTH REPRESENT** 

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**11 Park Place, Suite 1512, New York, NY 10007**  
**Telephone: 646.759.8080**  
[www.youthrepresent.org](http://www.youthrepresent.org)

Provides free comprehensive legal services to court-involved NYC youth. Services include representation in criminal and housing court, school suspension hearings, guidance on college applications, advocacy in employment matters, representation for young parents in family court, conviction history review, counseling on conviction history disclosure, and correction of erroneous conviction history records.

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**BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES**

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**10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238**  
**Telephone: 718.968.7275**  
[www.bklynlibrary.org/kids](http://www.bklynlibrary.org/kids)

Offers programming for children of all ages and their families including storytime, STEM, and more.

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**NYC ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES (ACS)—JUVENILE JUSTICE**  

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**150 William Street, New York, NY 10038**  
**Telephone: 212.676.9421 / Collect: 212.619.1309**  
[www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/justice/juvenile-justice.page](http://www1.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 [www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/borough-locations.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/borough-locations.page).

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## **NYC DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (DYCD)**

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**2 Lafayette Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007**

**Telephone: 800.246.4646 or 646.343.6800**

[www.nyc.gov/dycd](http://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.

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## **ALI FORNEY CENTER (AFC)**

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**224 West 35th Street, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10001**

**Telephone: 212.222.3427**

[www.aliforneycenter.org](http://www.aliforneycenter.org)

### **Drop-in Center**

**321 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027**

**Telephone: 212.206.0574**

Provides emergency housing and services to LGBTQI+ youth ages 16–24 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.

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## **COVENANT HOUSE NEW YORK**

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### **Intake and Crisis Shelter**

**550 10th Avenue, New York, NY 10018**

**Telephone: 212.613.0300**

<https://ny.covenanthouse.org>

A 24-hour multiservice walk-in center and shelter for young adults ages 16–24 experiencing homelessness. Services include crisis care, shelter, transitional living, healthcare, job-readiness training, educational support, legal services, street outreach, and aftercare.

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## THE DOOR

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**555 Broome Street, New York, NY 10013**

**Telephone: 212.941.9090**

[www.door.org](http://www.door.org)

### **Mailing Address**

**121 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013**

Provides a wide range of services including healthcare and counseling, HSE preparation, ESOL, tutoring and homework help, college preparation and computer classes, career development and training, job placement, legal services, arts and recreation, dental assistance, and sexual health and birth control for NYC youth ages 12–24. 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 text **929.357.0768**.

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## GENERATION NYC

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

An online platform that helps teens and young adults navigate NYC's resources and find support for a wide range of issues that they might be facing. Provides easy-to-read information on many subjects including school, work, budgeting, counseling, voting, housing, health, and more.

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## GIRL'S EDUCATIONAL AND MENTORING SERVICES (GEMS)

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Telephone: 917.837.0357

[www.gems-girls.org](http://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 12–24 who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation and/or domestic trafficking.

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## HETRICK-MARTIN INSTITUTE (HMI)

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2 Astor Place, New York, NY 10003

Telephone: 212.674.2400

[www.hmi.org](http://www.hmi.org)

Provides free year-round programs and services for LGBTQI+ youth ages 13–24 and their families in NYC. 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.

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## THE JEWISH BOARD—CROSS ROADS YOUTH CLINIC

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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 141](#)

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## LOVE IS RESPECT

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PO Box 90249, Austin, TX 78709

**Telephone: 866.331.9474 / TTY: 800.787.3224**

[www.loveisrespect.org](http://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 days, 7 days a week.

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## **SAFE HORIZON—STREETWORK PROJECT DROP-IN CENTERS**

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**Hotline: 800.708.6600**

[www.safehorizon.org/streetwork](http://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.

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## **THE TREVOR PROJECT**

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**PO Box 69232, West Hollywood, CA 90069**

**Telephone: 212.695.8650 / Lifeline: 866.488.7386**

[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

A national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQI+ young people under 25. The lifeline for immediate help is free, confidential, and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

# Working Papers

All New York City public school students between the ages of 14 and 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, call the **NYC Department of Education** at **718.935.2000** or visit [www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/working-papers](http://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](http://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

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NOURISH BEGINNINGS, LET US NOURISH BEGINNINGS.

NOT ALL THINGS ARE BLEST, BUT THE

SEEDS OF ALL THINGS ARE BLEST.

THE BLESSING IS IN THE SEED.

THIS MOMENT, THIS SEED, THIS WAVE OF THE SEA, THIS

LOOK, THIS INSTANT OF LOVE.

— MURIEL RUKEYSER, *ELEGY IN JOY*



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY P. IRIZARRY

# Organizations & Resources

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## BRONXWORKS—STRONG FATHERS, STRONGER FAMILIES



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Provides free services including employment services, parenting and healthy relationship education, child support cases, management assistance, legal seminars, financial education, peer mentorship, health insurance benefits screening, and participation incentives. Open to fathers ages 18 and over.

See the full listing for BronxWorks on [page 336](#).

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## CENTER FOR COURT INNOVATION—UPNEXT



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### Midtown Community Court

314 West 54 Street, New York, NY 10019

Telephone: 347.276.8972

[www.courtinnovation.org/programs/upnext](http://www.courtinnovation.org/programs/upnext)

A workforce development and fatherhood engagement initiative for noncustodial fathers. Provides training, resources, and advocacy to help individuals find employment and connect with families including visitation and help navigating child support. Each participating father is given a case manager for follow-up. Provides alternative programming for individuals who are currently working or have a schedule conflict. Call for enrollment information.

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## THE CHILD CENTER OF NY



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118-35 Queens Blvd., 6th Floor, Forest Hills, NY 11375

Telephone: 718.651.7770

[www.childcenterny.org](http://www.childcenterny.org)

Offers a range of programs for children and families in locations throughout NYC. Services include individual and family counsel-

ing and substance use disorder treatment for young people and adults; early childhood mental health services for families with children ages 0–5; virtual and in-person pediatrician visits through its Jamaica Family Wellness Center (JFWC); and education programs including Head Start centers and home-based Early Head Start programs, as well as afterschool and enrichment programs for youth ages 5–24 in Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan. The JFWC offers a televisiting program for children and families with an incarcerated parent. In Brooklyn, a residential treatment facility provides comprehensive care and education services for court-involved youth ages 12–18 who have had multiple unsuccessful psychiatric hospital placements. Also helps families enroll in social benefits and health insurance, and receive financial and legal assistance.

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### CHILDREN OF PROMISE, NYC (CPNYC)



[www.cpnyc.org](http://www.cpnyc.org)

**1842 Webster Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457**  
**Telephone: 718.461.5117**

**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.

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### CHILDREN'S AID



**117 West 124th Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10027**  
**Telephone: 212.949.4800**

[www.childrensaidnyc.org](http://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.

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## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS FOR YOUTH (CCFY)—PARENT PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

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**369 East 149th Street, 7th Floor, Bronx, NY 10455**

**Telephone: 347.590.0940**

[www.cc-fy.org](http://www.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.

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## HOURLY CHILDREN

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**36-11 12th Street, Long Island City, NY 11106**

**Telephone: 718.433.4724**

[www.hourchildren.org](http://www.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, mentoring for children with incarcerated parents, childcare that includes a fully-licensed daycare center and a free after-school 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.

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## IN ARMS REACH, INC.

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**160 Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031**  
**Telephone: 212.650.5894**  
[www.inarmsreach.net](http://www.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.

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## NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OF THE INCARCERATED

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<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.

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## OSBORNE ASSOCIATION

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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 55](#).

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## SINGLE PARENT RESOURCE CENTER

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**228 East 45th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10017**

**Telephone: 212.951.7030**

[www.singleparentusa.com](http://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.

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## NYC PUBLIC LIBRARIES—CULTURE PASS

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[www.culturepass.nyc](http://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.

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## THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—FAMILY & CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

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**Telephone: 917.275.6975**

[www.nypl.org](http://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 an array of cultural programs including lectures, concerts, films, exhibitions, and author talks. Call or go online to find programs and how to sign up.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DOE)—EARLYLEARN

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**Telephone: 718.935.2009**

[www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/earlylearn-nyc](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/earlylearn-nyc)

Provides a number of free or low-cost EarlyLearn programs offering early care and education for children from birth to two years old, all year round for up to 10 hours a day. Includes education, health, nutrition, and social services. Must be income and family-size eligible. Sliding scale fee.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING—GRANDPARENT RESOURCE CENTER

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**Telephone: 311**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/dfta/caregivers/caring-for-children.page](http://www1.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 city's aging and child welfare systems.

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**NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE—  
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS (FJCS)**  

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Telephone: 311

[www1.nyc.gov/site/ocdv/programs/family-justice-centers.page](http://www1.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.

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**NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)—  
STATE CENTRAL REGISTRY PROJECT** 

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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 187](#).

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**NEW YORK FOUNDLING**  

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**590 6th Avenue, New York, NY 10011**

**Telephone: 212.633.9300**

[www.nyfoundling.org](http://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 under age 18 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.

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## **POSTPARTUM RESOURCE CENTER IN NEW YORK**

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**Helpline: 855.631.0001 or 631.422.2255**

[www.postpartumny.org](http://www.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.

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## **SAFE HORIZON**

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**2 Lafayette Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10007**

**Telephone: 212.577.7700**

[www.safehorizon.org](http://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.

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**SANCTUARY FOR FAMILIES**  

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**PO Box 1406, Wall Street Station, New York, NY 10268**  
**Telephone: 212.349.6009**  
[www.sanctuaryforfamilies.org](http://www.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 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. The anti-trafficking initiative provides survivors of sex trafficking a range of resources including legal services, counseling, and case management. Telehealth services are available.

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**SCO FAMILY OF SERVICES**   

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**154 Lawrence Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201**  
**Telephone: 718.797.3068**  
**Foster Care Emergency Assistance Hotline: 718.674.7800**  
[www.sco.org](http://www.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.

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## **UNITED ACTIVITIES UNLIMITED (UAU)—FATHERHOOD MATTERS**

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**400 Victory Blvd., Suite C, Staten Island, NY 10310**

**Telephone: 718.448.5151**

[www.uaufatherhoodmatters.org](http://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.

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## **WIN NYC**

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**1 State Street Plaza, 18th Floor, New York, NY 10004**

**Telephone: 212.695.4758**

[www.winnyc.org](http://www.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 of *What Do Incarcerated Parents Need to Know About ACS?* at [www.welcometocup.org/Store?product\\_id=207](http://www.welcometocup.org/Store?product_id=207) or for a printed copy, write to:

**Attn: Jail Services  
Brooklyn Defender Services  
177 Livingston Street, 7th Floor  
Brooklyn, NY 11201**

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**CENTER FOR FAMILY REPRESENTATION (CFR)**



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**Telephone: 212.691.0950**  
[www.cfrny.org](http://www.cfrny.org)

**Manhattan Headquarters**  
**40 Worth Street, Suite 605, New York, NY 10013**

**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.

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**NYC ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
(ACS)—OFFICE OF ADVOCACY**  

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**150 William Street, 1st Floor, New York, NY 10038**  
**Helpline: 212.676.9421 / Collect: 212.341.3322**  
**TTY: 212.442.1447**  
[www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/advocacy.page](http://www1.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.

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**LEGAL INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES TODAY (LIFT)** 



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**32 Court Street, Suite 1208, Brooklyn, NY 11201**  
**Family Law Helpline: 212.343.1122**  
[www.liftonline.org](http://www.liftonline.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, 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.

## 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 328](#).

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.

**Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT)** created a guide, *Family Court Basics for Parents Who Were Previously Incarcerated*, available at [www.liftonline.org](http://www.liftonline.org), in English and Spanish. The guide answers questions that formerly incarcerated parents may have about paternity, child support, custody, and visitation.

Look up Child Support in the index to find more organizations that offer help navigating child support.

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## **NYS OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE—CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**

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**Child Support Helpline: 888.208.4485 / TTY: 866.875.9975**  
[www.childsupport.ny.gov/dcse/home.html](http://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 how to make 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.

Call or visit [www.childsupport.ny.gov/dcse/covid19\\_services.html](http://www.childsupport.ny.gov/dcse/covid19_services.html) for the most updated information on local child support offices operating hours.

**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  
Telephone: 718.503.5200

**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  
Telephone: 718.724.5300

**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  
Telephone: 212.356.1800

**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  
Telephone: 718.558.2200

**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  
Telephone: 718.876.3620

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

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

**Child Support Helpline: 888.208.4485**

[www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/child-support-services.page](http://www1.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 programs, mediation services, and the Support Through Employment Program (STEP).

Provides programs for low-income noncustodial parents to reduce child support orders and arrears owed. The Modify DSS Order (MDO) program helps those who have orders that are not based on

current incomes. The Arrears Cap Initiative can put a limit on accumulated child support owed. The Arrears Credit Program (ACP) can help with reducing the amount of arrears that are owed. Contact for more information on qualifying and how to apply.

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## CHILD FIND OF AMERICA—PARENT HELP

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**Hotline: 800.716.3468**

[www.childfindofamerica.org/services/parent-help](http://www.childfindofamerica.org/services/parent-help)

Provides free and confidential services for parents living apart, including visitation/custody mediation over the phone.

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## COMMUNITY MEDIATION SERVICES (CMS)

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**89-64 163rd Street, Jamaica, NY 11432**

**Telephone: 718.523.6868**

[www.mediatenyc.org](http://www.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.

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## NEW YORK PEACE INSTITUTE

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[www.nypeace.org](http://www.nypeace.org)

**111 John Street, Suite 600, New York, NY 10038**

**Telephone: 212.577.1740**

**210 Joralemon Street, Suite 618, Brooklyn, NY 11201**

**Telephone: 718.834.6681**

Provides free visitation/custody mediation. Divorce mediation offered on a sliding-scale fee schedule.

# Additional Hotlines & Directories

## **NYS CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES ABUSE HOTLINE**

Hotline: 800.342.3720 / TTY: 800.638.5163

[www.ocfs.ny.gov/programs/cps](http://www.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

[www.opdv.ny.gov/help/dvhotlines.html](http://www.opdv.ny.gov/help/dvhotlines.html)

Provides referrals to local services. Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## **NYC 311—CHILD CARE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

[www1.nyc.gov/apps/311utils/providerInformation.htm?serviceId=1050](http://www1.nyc.gov/apps/311utils/providerInformation.htm?serviceId=1050)

An online directory for childcare programs in NYC.

## **ACS CONNECTME**

<https://acsconnectme.nyc.gov>

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](http://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

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# Organizations for Job Seekers

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WE CAN'T BUILD WHAT WE CAN'T IMAGINE, SO IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR US TO CREATE SPACES THAT ALLOW US TO INFINITELY STRETCH OUR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE.

— WALIDAH IMARISHA



USED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ARTIST.

ARTWORK BY TONY C. SMITH

# Job Search Assistance & Placement

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## BRONXWORKS

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### Administration Office

60 East Tremont Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453

Telephone: 646.393.4000 / Hotline: 718.731.3114

[www.bronxworks.org](http://www.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. The Young Adult Internship Program offers out-of-school youth ages 16–24 a 14-week paid orientation, job training, personal development, and short-term internship opportunities. Also provides children and youth programs, family programs, services for older people, immigration services, eviction prevention, homeless services, 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.

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## CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (CEO)

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Provides employment and training programs to formerly incarcerated people and young adults ages 18–24.

See the full listing for CEO on [page 48](#).

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## DEFY VENTURES

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5 Penn Plaza, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 800.680.0563

[www.defyventures.org](http://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](mailto:info@defyventures.org) for more information about the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp program.

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## THE DOE FUND—READY, WILLING & ABLE

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### Administration Office

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

Telephone: 212.628.5207

[www.doe.org](http://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. 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.

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## DRIVE CHANGE

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### Mailing Address

630 Flushing Ave, Mailbox #25, Brooklyn, NY 11206

[www.drivechangenyc.org](http://www.drivechangenyc.org)

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

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## THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NEW YORK (THE HORT)—GREENHOUSE

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148 West 37th Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018

Telephone: 212.757.0915

[www.thehort.org](http://www.thehort.org)

A therapeutic horticulture and vocational training program based on Rikers Island serving in-person groups. Participants learn professional gardening skills with indoor and outdoor plants, growing garden produce, and deepening their knowledge of the natural world. Hands-on and classroom instruction includes botany, nutrition, organic farming, and garden design. All participants receive certificates after meeting the requisite hours and eligible participants can become part of the Hort's Workforce Development, which offers horticultural training in paid internships upon release. Interested candidates on Rikers Island should contact their dorm officer or person in charge of assignment. Individuals returning from state facilities who are interested in the Workforce Development can call for more information.

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### **NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (NYCLA)— PROJECT RESTORE & STATE CENTRAL REGISTRY PROJECT**

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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 187](#).

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### **THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY (NYPL)—CAREER SERVICES**

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[www.nypl.org/education/adults/career-employment/virtual](http://www.nypl.org/education/adults/career-employment/virtual)

**Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL)**  
**455 Fifth 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**

Provides information on all aspects of career development, career coaching, and job application, resume, cover letter, and mock interview support. Services also include in-person and virtual workshops, webinars on resumes, interviews, networking, one-on-one assistance, and more. Obtain updated lists of job search and employment websites, which are prepared by library staff to 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 [nypl.org/coaching](https://nypl.org/coaching) to make an appointment.

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 One-on-One Career and Resilience Coaching service provides in-depth career development help and support for creating a resilient mindset for the job search and other life events. Visit the website to schedule an appointment or email [careerservicesSNFL@nypl.org](mailto:careerservicesSNFL@nypl.org) for more information.

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## **BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY (BPL)—BUSINESS & CAREER SERVICES**

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**10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238**  
**Telephone: 718.968.7275**  
[www.bklynlibrary.org/business](https://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 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 that could help you in your 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.

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## **QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY—JOB & BUSINESS ACADEMY (JBA)**

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**89-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11432**

**Telephone: 718.990.8625 or 718.661.1205**

[www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/job-business](http://www.queenslibrary.org/programs-activities/job-business)

Provides free job-search assistance and technology training. Services are designed to build the skills needed to compete in a fast-changing and competitive employment landscape. 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. Email your resume or job search questions to [jobsearchhelp@queenslibrary.org](mailto:jobsearchhelp@queenslibrary.org).

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## NYS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR—FEDERAL BONDING PROGRAM

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**Telephone: 518.485.8037**

[www.labor.ny.gov/businessservices/services/fbp.shtm](http://www.labor.ny.gov/businessservices/services/fbp.shtm)

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. Call or go online to find local bonding coordinators.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES— WORKFORCE 1 (WF1) CAREER CENTERS

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**Telephone: 311**

[www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/wf1](http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/wf1)

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. For more information, call and ask for “Workforce 1” or visit the website.

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## NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY (NYCHA)—JOBS-PLUS

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[www.opportunitynycha.org/workforce-development/jobs-plus](http://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**

BronxWorks–630 Jackson Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455  
Serves: East 152nd Street–Courtlandt Avenue, Moore, Betances, and Melrose Houses  
Telephone: 718.993.8880

East Side House–201 St. Ann’s Avenue, Basement, Bronx, NY 10454  
Serves: Mill Brook Houses  
Telephone: 718.304.0155

Goodwill Industries–1620 Bruckner Blvd., Bronx, NY 10473  
Serves: Sack Wern, Clason Point Gardens, and Monroe Houses  
Telephone: 347.291.8050

**Brooklyn**

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation–425 New Lots Avenue, Main Suite, Brooklyn, NY 11207  
Serves: Pennsylvania Avenue–Wortman Avenue Houses  
Telephone: 347.537.2925

Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation–630 Flushing Avenue, 1st Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11206  
Serves: Marcy, Lafayette, Armstrong I, and Armstrong II  
Telephone: 917.267.5575

DB Grant–330 Powell Street, Brooklyn, NY 11212  
Serves: Van Dyke I and Brownsville Houses  
Telephone: 347.599.9655

**Manhattan**

Henry Street Settlement–24 Avenue D, New York, NY 10009  
Serves: Wald and Riis II 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**

Urban Upbound–4-25 Astoria Blvd., Astoria, NY 11102  
Serves: Astoria Houses  
Telephone: 718.204.2430 x221

### **Staten Island**

Arbor/ResCare–30 Bay Street, 4th Floor, Staten Island, NY 10301  
Serves: Mariners Harbor, Richmond Terrace, Stapleton, South Beach, West Brighton I, and Todt Hill Houses  
Telephone: 718.285.8394

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## **AMERICA WORKS**

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### **Headquarters Office**

**228 East 45th Street, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10017**

**Telephone: 212.947.5627**

[www.americaworks.com](http://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. Call for orientation dates and times.

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## **BROOKLYN WORKFORCE INNOVATIONS (BWI)**

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**621 Degraw Street, Brooklyn, NY 11217**

**Telephone: 718.237.2017**

[www.bwiny.org](http://www.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 and industrial businesses), 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 resi-

dents 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.

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## **CAMBA—WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES**

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**2244 Church Avenue, 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 120](#).

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## **CAREER GEAR**

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**600 5th Avenue, The Studio, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10022**

**Telephone: 212.577.6190**

[www.careergear.org](http://www.careergear.org)

Provides suiting and employment retention services for men. The Mentoring Program provides individualized counseling for six months to help navigate barriers and challenges. Clients are referred by partner agencies.

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## CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL—WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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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 232](#).

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## DRESS FOR SUCCESS WORLDWIDE—NEW YORK PROGRAM

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Telephone: 646.233.4959

<https://newyork.dressforsuccess.org>

32 East 31st Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016

129-11 Merrick Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11434

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

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## EPRA—JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES

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261 West 35th Street, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10001

Telephone: 212.947.1471

[www.eprany.org](http://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.

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## GOODWILL NYNJ—WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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**25 Elm Place, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11201**

**Telephone: 718.728.5400**

[www.goodwillnynj.org/what-we-do/job-seekers-and-employers](http://www.goodwillnynj.org/what-we-do/job-seekers-and-employers)

Provides training and job-placement. GoodTemps is a contractual temporary staffing service, specializing in short- and long-term employment and temp-to-hire opportunities for a diverse population, including people with disabilities, seniors, and those with barriers to employment.

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## THE HOPE PROGRAM

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[www.thehopeprogram.org](http://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 and job placement including HOPEworks (animal care, retail, customer service, and more), FOODworks (food industry), and Sustainable South Bronx (sustainable construction). Support services include legal counseling, food and clothing, and assistance in childcare, medical, and transitional work benefits. 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.

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## HOT BREAD KITCHEN

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**Telephone: 929.282.4554**

[www.hotbreadkitchen.org](http://www.hotbreadkitchen.org)

Offers programs and services for women, immigrants, and people of color who are interested in a career in the food industry, facil-

ity management, and more. Also offers ESOL courses. Visit the website for current program offerings.

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## **NONTRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN (NEW)**

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**243 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011**

**Telephone: 212.627.6252**

[www.new-nyc.org](http://www.new-nyc.org)

An employment and training program for women interested in construction, utility, and maintenance trades. 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.

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## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW (OBT)**

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[www.obtjobs.org](http://www.obtjobs.org)

Employment training centers for adults and youth providing basic education, HSE preparation, job training, job placement, and follow-up services. Youth programs include youth education and job training, digital marketing, medical administrative assistant training, masonry technician training, cloud support engineering, and Advance and Earn. Adult services include job placement assistance and adult education classes. Provides immigration assistance for new Americans, including ESOL classes. Visit the website for information about classes, eligibility, and registration.

### **Bushwick Office**

**25 Thornton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206**

**Telephone: 646.535.2270**

### **Sunset Park Office**

**882 3rd Avenue, Suite 10-10 NE, Unit 18, Brooklyn, NY 11232**

**Telephone: 718.369.0303**

### **Innovation Lab**

**87 35th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11232**

**Telephone: 718.801.8970**

**Jamaica Office**  
**168-25 Jamaica Avenue, Suite 202, Jamaica, NY 11432**  
**Telephone: 718.526.2984**

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## **QUEENS COLLEGE—WOMEN AND WORK PROGRAM**

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**65-30 Kissena Blvd., Flushing, NY 11367**  
**Telephone: 718.997.4886**  
[www.qc.cuny.edu/community/womenwork](http://www.qc.cuny.edu/community/womenwork)

A 14-week program to help prepare women ages 18 and over to enter or reenter the workplace. Microsoft Office instruction, math, workplace reading and writing, resumes, professional attire, and interview skills are covered. Includes post-program support. Must legally be able to work in the US and have a high school diploma or equivalency. Computer experience is not required.

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## **STREETWISE PARTNERS**

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**222 Broadway, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10038**  
**Telephone: 646.704.0039**  
[www.streetwisepartners.org](http://www.streetwisepartners.org)

Connects underemployed/unemployed New Yorkers with mentors who are achieving success in professional fields. Helps job seekers develop office and computer skills, be prepared for interviews, learn how to network, and more. Must commit to 13 consecutive weekly sessions and have a high school diploma or equivalency. Call or visit the website for further eligibility requirements.

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## **STRIVE INTERNATIONAL**

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**205 East 122nd Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10035**  
**Telephone: 212.360.1100**  
[www.strive.org](http://www.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. Provides lifetime services and support to graduates of the program. Visit the website to register for an information session.

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## **VOLUNTEERS OF LEGAL SERVICE (VOLS)—UNEMPLOYED WORKERS PROJECT**

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**40 Worth Street, Suite 820, New York, NY 10013**  
**Telephone: 347.521.5720 or 212.966.4400**  
[www.volsprobono.org](http://www.volsprobono.org)

Provides free advice to low-wage, unemployed workers in New York who are seeking to access their government benefits, including updates as state and federal rules change. For assistance, call the hotline or visit the website to fill out the online form.

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## **WORKERS DEFENSE LEAGUE (WDL)**

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**PO Box 618, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159**  
**Telephone: 212.627.1931**  
[www.workersdefenseleague.org](http://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**

### **CONCONNECT**

[www.conconnect.com](http://www.conconnect.com)

A professional-based social network geared towards reentry for for-

merly incarcerated people. People can create a profile to connect with reentry organizations, employers, and their peers.

### **NATIONAL HIRE NETWORK**

[www.hirenetwork.org](http://www.hirenetwork.org)

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/oooh](http://www.bls.gov/oooh)

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**

[www.labor.ny.gov/home](http://www.labor.ny.gov/home)

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**

[www.careerzone.ny.gov](http://www.careerzone.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**

[www1.nyc.gov/jobs](http://www1.nyc.gov/jobs)

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, along with free online training.

## **IDEALIST**

[www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org)

Search for job listings and volunteer opportunities in the nonprofit sector, by location.

## **INDEED**

[www.indeed.com](http://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](http://www.linkedin.com)

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

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## **WORKSHOP IN BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES (WIBO)— GUTENSTEIN FOUNDATION ENTREPRENEURIAL RE-ENTRY PROGRAM**

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411 Lafayette Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10003

Telephone: 646.400.0566 x125

[www.wibo.works/reentry-program](http://www.wibo.works/reentry-program)

Provides scholarships for a 10-week or 16-week business plan workshop for formerly incarcerated people. Other services include a legal clinic, accounting clinic, business advising, and monthly seminars. Contact for more information on the application process and workshop dates.

## **EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT—DIVISION OF MINORITY AND WOMEN'S BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

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633 3rd Avenue, 37th Floor, New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 855.373.4692

[www.esd.ny.gov/doing-business-ny/mwbe](http://www.esd.ny.gov/doing-business-ny/mwbe)

Provides information and resources to support minority- and women-owned businesses in the NYC procurement process.

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## NYC DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND WORKER PROTECTION (DCWP)

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42 Broadway, New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 311

[www.nyc.gov/dca](http://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.

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## NYC SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

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Telephone: 311

[www.nyc.gov/sbs](http://www.nyc.gov/sbs)

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.

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## BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTER NETWORK (BOC)

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[www.bocnet.org](http://www.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.

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## **SCORE NEW YORK CITY**

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**26 Federal Plaza, 31st Floor, New York, NY 10278**

**Telephone: 212.264.4507**

[www.newyorkcity.score.org](http://www.newyorkcity.score.org)

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.

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## **START SMALL THINK BIG**

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**511 Avenue of the Americas, #4151, New York, NY 10011**

**Telephone: 646.723.4053 x101**

[www.startsmallthinkbig.org](http://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

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# 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 41](#) and Reentry Task Forces by county starting on [page 42](#).

## 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 244](#)
- Permanent Resident Card (green card, for non-US citizens), more information found on [page 229](#)
- Proof of education (college transcripts or HSE certificate), more information found on [page 64](#)
- Working papers (required for people under 18 years of age), more information found on [page 311](#)

- 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 359](#) for more information.

If you were vaccinated while incarcerated, make sure you are given your vaccination card upon release. For more information on replacing COVID-19 vaccination cards see [page 29](#).

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 the certificates discussed below. 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 legally prohibited from applying for certain civil service positions that are classified as public office, such as firefighters. Visit <https://niccc.csgjusticecenter.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 [www.justiceandopportunity.org/research/getting-to-work-with-a-criminal-record-new-york-state-license-guides-2020-expanded-edition](http://www.justiceandopportunity.org/research/getting-to-work-with-a-criminal-record-new-york-state-license-guides-2020-expanded-edition).

To restore your rights, you need:

- a **Certificate of Relief from Disabilities**, for those who have been convicted of only misdemeanors and not more than one felony, or one felony only
- 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 362](#).

### **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 1995 and a class-B felony from 2005, and you were discharged from parole in 2017. Since your most serious crime was a B felony, you would have to wait five years from the completion of your most recent sentence (2017). Therefore, you would be eligible to apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct in 2022.

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**

Application forms are also available at 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

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.

For more information, contact your parole/probation officer, or the **Legal Action Center, 225 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014**, telephone: **212.243.1313**. You can also visit [www.reentry.net/ny](http://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: 518.457.5837**

[www.criminaljustice.ny.gov](http://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.

The Legal Action Center has a useful booklet called *Your New York State Rap Sheet: A Guide to Getting, Understanding, and Correcting Your Criminal Record*. The guide is available online at [www.lac.org/resource/employment-with-a-criminal-record](http://www.lac.org/resource/employment-with-a-criminal-record), or you can request a copy by contacting them by phone at **212.243.1313** or writing to **225 Varick Street, New York, NY 10014**.

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-258 (available at any police precinct for a fee) with the date, your name, and your date and place of birth; 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](http://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** or visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). You can also write to **Annual Credit Report Request Service, PO Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348** for more information. A Social Security number is needed to obtain your 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](http://www.nycourts.gov/apps/chrs) for more information.

Upgrading a less-than-honorable military discharge can be advantageous to your future. Contact the Veterans Affairs New York Regional Office at **800.827.1000** to request an application or visit [www.va.gov/discharge-upgrade-instructions](http://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](http://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 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 **212.243.3113**. 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](http://www.lac.org) or you can write to them at **225 Varick Street, 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 371](#) and in the *Interview* section on [page 394](#).

### **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, 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 211](#).

In New York City, it is illegal for interviewers to ask about your past compensation amounts (salary or hourly wage).

### **COVID-19 and Workers' Rights**

For questions about reopening, health and safety guidelines for the workplace, or to report an employer that is not following reopening requirements, call the **NYC Worker Protect Hotline** at **212.436.0381** or visit [www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/workers/worker-rights.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/workers/worker-rights.page). The website also has a PDF called *Workers' Bill of Rights* in 15 languages.

### **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 hunting. 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](http://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: _____                 |

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**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:

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2. "I am \_\_\_\_\_. I have shown this quality by:

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3. "I am \_\_\_\_\_. I have shown this quality by:

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**Identifying Job-Content Skills**

Check the skills that you have now that are specific to a particular job.

**Administrative Skills**

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- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <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**

---

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can assemble, tune, repair, or operate engines or other machinery. | <input type="checkbox"/> I can understand and use blue-prints.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can assess, repair, or upgrade computers and phones.               | <input type="checkbox"/> I can construct, maintain, or restore buildings. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can repair automobiles.  | <input type="checkbox"/> I can make or repair furniture.                  |

**Skills in Working with People or Providing Services to People**

---

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can diffuse difficult situations between people. | <input type="checkbox"/> I enjoy teaching people a new skill.      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am caring, sensitive, and people-oriented.       | <input type="checkbox"/> I enjoy working with all kinds of people. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can help people solve problems.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> I can talk easily and put people at ease. |

**Language Skills** (Spanish, American Sign Language, Creole, etc.):

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**Licenses/Certificates I Hold** (driver’s license, OSHA, MS Office, etc.):

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# 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) 2014–2017 Smith & Sons, Bronx, NY  
**HVAC Technician**
- heating, ventilation, and cooling
  - inspections and repairs
- (b) 2014–2017 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 contents 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 70](#).

# Sample Resumes

On the following pages are three sample resumes with notes explaining how formerly incarcerated people can present their time in prison.

# 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: 2011
- Elmira CF Automotive Shop, 1,500 hours of training: 2008
- Henry Hudson High School, New York, NY: 2006  
Electrical Shop, Automotive Shop, Mechanical Drawing

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE, 2008–2011

- 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: 2017–2019

- Pumped gas and performed light auto-body repair on various types of vehicles
- Supervised a small team of attendants

#### House Painter, 18 months experience: 2014–2016

- 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 2011

- Responsible for electrical wiring and new window installation

#### Jewelry Vendor, NYC: 2006–2007

- 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 2008–2011, 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 four-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 / 2014  
**Licensed Asbestos Handler**

Ulster Community College / 2013

**Associate Degree in Business Administration**

US Army / 2005

**Airframe and Powerplant License**

### Work Experience

**Asbestos Handler / Mid-Apple CF / 2014–2019**

**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 team of six.

**Manager / Puebla Market / 2006–2011**

**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 / 2000–2004**

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 2011–2019 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 adapted to and utilized video-conferencing technologies, ensuring smooth communication transition 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**

2019–Present

#### **Grievance Office Clerk | Rose M. Singer Center, NY**

2017

#### **Administrative Assistant | Southwell Health, NY**

2013–2015

### EDUCATION

#### 3 →

##### **Associate in Science Degree in Business Management**

2019 | CUNY Hostos, NY

##### **Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Excel Certification**

2016 | NYEM, New York, NY

#### 4 →

##### **Administrative Assistant Certificate**

2013 | CUNY LaGuardia, NY

## Notes to Sample Resume III

Jennifer Blake spent most of 2017 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 →** Due to COVID-19, 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 billions of people are online, and 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 these days. Generally, it is best to avoid numeric characters in your professional email address, but you can use it 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 335](#), 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 70](#).

### **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 48](#)), 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

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# 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

Most 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 408](#) 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 362](#) 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 371](#).

## 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 all information. 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

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## Employment History

List below your three most recent employers, beginning with the current or most recent one. If you have had fewer than three employers, include any relevant volunteer work.

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of work: \_\_\_\_\_

Date started: \_\_\_\_\_ Date left: \_\_\_\_\_ Why did you leave? \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of work: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date started: \_\_\_\_\_ Date left: \_\_\_\_\_ Why did you leave? \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of work: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date started: \_\_\_\_\_ Date left: \_\_\_\_\_ Why did you leave? \_\_\_\_\_

## References

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Company/Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Company/Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

*To the best of my knowledge, the above information is correct. I understand that the employer may wish to investigate employment history by questioning my references and former employers, and I have no objection to this. I understand that my employment is subject to a 90 day probation period.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Interviewing for a Job

## 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 is 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](http://www.glassdoor.com/blog/common-interview-questions).

Indeed's Career Guide, found online at [www.indeed.com/career-advice?from=careeradvice](http://www.indeed.com/career-advice?from=careeradvice), 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 362](#) to learn more about answering questions related to your conviction and avoiding discrimination.

Due to COVID-19, 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.” Even if an interviewer asks a question such as, “How are you holding up this year?” be sure to focus on work and not disclose personal information in your answer.

### **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 408](#), 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.

Make sure you know any COVID-19 safety precautions that have been put in place by the organization or company you are applying to. This can be mask requirements, vaccination requirements, or getting your temperature taken.

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 **718.330.1234** for information on the best route to take or for schedules. You can also visit the trip planner at [www.tripplanner.mta.info](http://www.tripplanner.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 is 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 363](#).

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](http://www.bls.gov/ooh), but remember it is illegal to be asked about your salary history in NYC.

In most instances, the decision 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 what 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, worker's 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 COVID-19 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 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.

For recorded information on unemployment insurance, call **888.209.8124** (Spanish spoken). 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 food stamps or Medicaid (see the *Financial Assistance* chapter starting on [page 110](#)), 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

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## 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

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Name of Company

Address

Phone/Email

Name of Contact Person

Date & Time of Appointment

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