



New York City Jails Action Coalition

c/o Urban Justice Center
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New York, NY 10006
www.nyciac.org

February 18, 2016

Stanley Brezenoff, Chair
Members of the Board of Correction
51 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Brezenoff and Board Members:

We appreciate the important step taken by the Board during your January meeting to direct field staff to investigate and report on the operations of restrictive units throughout the New York City jail System. We are concerned about the restrictions people face when they are placed in these housing units, and their rights to due process.

We write to request that the Board make public and available for comment the findings of the Board's investigation and reporting. In addition, we request that Board field staff investigate and report on a number of important areas related to the operation of specific units, including but not limited to:

- Due process protections (if any) afforded to individuals subject to placement in restrictive units, and compliance with existing requirements;
- Procedures for release from restrictive housing areas, including data related to the number and proportion of people released, and how long after placement individuals are released if ever;
- Access to the following essential services, and compliance with the Minimum Standards:
 - Showers
 - Telephone Calls
 - Recreation
 - Visits
 - Sick call and access to care
 - Court productions
- Access to programming;
- Physical plant descriptions;
- Access to educational services, particularly among Young Adult cohort;
- Frequency and duration of lockdowns;
- Frequency and severity of uses of force;
- Frequency of violent incidents;

- Number of grievances received related to conditions and retention in restrictive units and nature of responses to those grievances; and
- Census data disaggregated by demographic factors.

We look forward to reviewing the information collected by Board staff during the investigation. Further, we hope to work closely with the Board to develop appropriate due process protections to ensure that placement in restrictive units is not arbitrary and that people are housed in the least-restrictive settings possible. We are dedicated to pushing for safer and more humane jails in New York City, and believe that the reforms pursued by the Board in this area are timely and appropriate.

Sincerely,

Jails Action Coalition