

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES. CHANGING LIVES.



NeON
Stakeholder Group
Guide

NeON

**STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES.
CHANGING
LIVES.**

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Commissioner

ANA M. BERMÚDEZ

LEADING THE WAY

Social Action & The Pursuit of Social Justice

Dear New and Continuing NeON Stakeholders,

We are issuing this brand-new Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON) Stakeholder Guide at a moment in time when the work we are doing together within and beyond the criminal justice system is more critical than ever to ensure equity in access to opportunities, resources, and a seat at the table. The communities we serve throughout New York City have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID19 pandemic, just as they have been disproportionately impacted by the justice system for decades. In releasing this Guide, we are renewing our commitment to celebrate and nurture the resilience and brilliance of NeON neighborhood residents through our collective work.

NeON Stakeholder Groups are an expression of our commitment to work closely with the communities we serve, and inform NeONs work in the local community. The NeON Stakeholder Groups are intended to serve as a platform where information, consultation, resources and recommendations are freely exchanged.

Our creativity and adaptability has greatly helped in keeping our clients and communities engaged, supported, and healthy, and NeON Stakeholders played a critical role in many of these initiatives: NeON Summer, NeON Arts, NeON Works, NeON Nutrition Kitchens, Civic Engagement Projects, Knockout COVID: Youth Campaign, virtual groups of many varieties (including pizza deliveries and crafts making!), just to name a few.

This work takes time and effort, but it has a significant impact on the safety and health of people on probation and communities, and as an extension, the safety of our great city. I am so grateful for your service to the NeONs and pleased to issue a formal letter of thanks to each volunteer Stakeholder this year. I am not alone in being grateful for the work you are doing. Your efforts are recognized across the city. Each NeON stakeholder who volunteers 100 hours will be submitted to the NYC Service Mayoral Service Recognition Program.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES. CHANGING LIVES.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to the communities we serve and extend a hearty welcome to New Stakeholders. We are honored that you chose the NeON to share your talents, gifts and creativity. Community members bring intimate knowledge, hyper-local expertise and unique insight into the barriers faced by justice-involved people in their communities, as well as potential solutions.

We will continue to be creative and relentless in our pursuit of community safety in this brave new world and figure out what the future of our practice and programming will look like. We need each other now more than ever, and we will continue to seek new opportunities for community partnership to best serve everyone who calls New York City home. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Ana M. Bermúdez

Ana M. Bermúdez
Commissioner



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION

OUR MAIN MISSION

The New York City Department of Probation is a leader in community corrections, working within the criminal and juvenile justice systems and in the community to create a safer New York. Using Evidence-Based Practices (EBP), and a balance of enforcement, structure, treatment and support, we hold people on probation accountable and give them opportunities to forge new pathways so that they can move out and stay out of the justice system.



ASSESS AND RESPOND TO RISK AND NEEDS

01

We evaluate all people on probation with an age-appropriate, validated risk assessment instrument. With that knowledge we calibrate the "dosage" of probation to the appropriate risk levels, and we target the need areas most likely to keep someone involved in the justice system. This is what we call our "one size fits one" approach.

02

ENGAGING PROBATION CLIENTS

Using a strength-based approach, our officers spend time with the individuals they supervise to get to know their strengths and aspirations, so that the officers can use that knowledge to motivate and coach their probation clients towards a law abiding future. Probation Officers work with the probation clients and their circle of influence to develop an Individual Action Plan (IAP). The IAP serves as a guide for every meeting, and through the IAP our officers work to develop transformational relationships with clients and keep them accountable as they work on goals and action steps.

03

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITIES OF OUR PROBATION CLIENTS

Working closely with the communities we serve is critical to client success. Our Neighborhood Opportunity Networks (NeON) offer easy access to essential services and make clients feel closer to their neighbors. This innovative and successful model of probation supervision has inspired similar efforts nationwide.



04

USING DATA TO GUIDE DECISION-MAKING

We engage in regular quality assurance and data analysis to ensure we are having the intended impact through our practices and programs, making a difference in the lives of the people we serve. We evaluate all people on probation with an age-appropriate, validated risk assessment instrument. With that knowledge we calibrate the "dosage" of probation to the appropriate risk levels, and we target the needs areas most likely to keep someone involved in the justice system. This is what we call our "one size fits one" approach.

05

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to the professional growth of our staff. We strive to provide the people we serve with a transformative experience—changing lives for the better—with trust, compassion, and personal accountability. We do it in close cooperation with the criminal and juvenile justice systems and in collaboration with our community partners and service providers.

**STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES.
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About NeON

Over the past few years, the NYC Department of Probation (DOP) has undergone significant organizational cultural change, shifting from a punitive, deficit-based model to a more holistic, strengths-based model. In an effort to better deliver resources to people on probation in the neighborhoods in which they reside, DOP mapped the neighborhoods in which their clients lived in order to determine where resources were needed. There were seven neighborhoods: Bedford Stuyvesant, Brownsville, East New York, Harlem, Jamaica, Northern Staten Island and the South Bronx. Six of these neighborhoods had previously been identified as having disproportionately high rates of incarceration and concentrated disadvantage some 40 years earlier, in what became known as the "Seven Neighborhood Study" researched and written by Eddie Ellis and other incarcerated men in "The Think Thank" at Green Haven Prison.



Evidence-based practice in community corrections says you have to work on community engagement, making sure people are really connected to and invested in their communities in part because then they are less likely to cause harm in those communities.

EVIDENCED BASED PRACTICES

In Community Corrections

The NeON seeks to strengthen the communities that people on probation call home because for decades these neighborhoods have experienced high rates of incarceration and lower rates of investments and resource-development as other NYC neighborhoods.

A growing empirical literature supports the influence of neighborhood context on justice system outcomes, with individuals residing in disadvantaged and under-resourced areas at higher risk for a new arrest or violation of community supervision (Kubrin and Stewart 2006; Mears et al. 2008; Hipp et al. 2010).

Moreover, the geographic concentration of justice-involved residents, coupled with high rates of policing and incarceration in some of these same neighborhoods can have negative consequences for the community as a whole (Sampson and Loeffler 2010; Henmen 2017). With respect to community corrections, this implies that not just individuals, but also neighborhoods can be high risk (Byrne et al. 2009).



Based on this information, the Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON) took shape, and NeONs were established as resource hubs in each of these seven communities, as shown in the map above.

The NeONs host several support services onsite through public/private partnerships and with local community-based organizations to weave together a network of quality opportunities for community members regardless of their justice involvement. These services include employment, health insurance, nutrition kitchens, housing assistance, clothing closets, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence programs, parent & family support groups, mentoring, art, sports and more.



NeON Vision

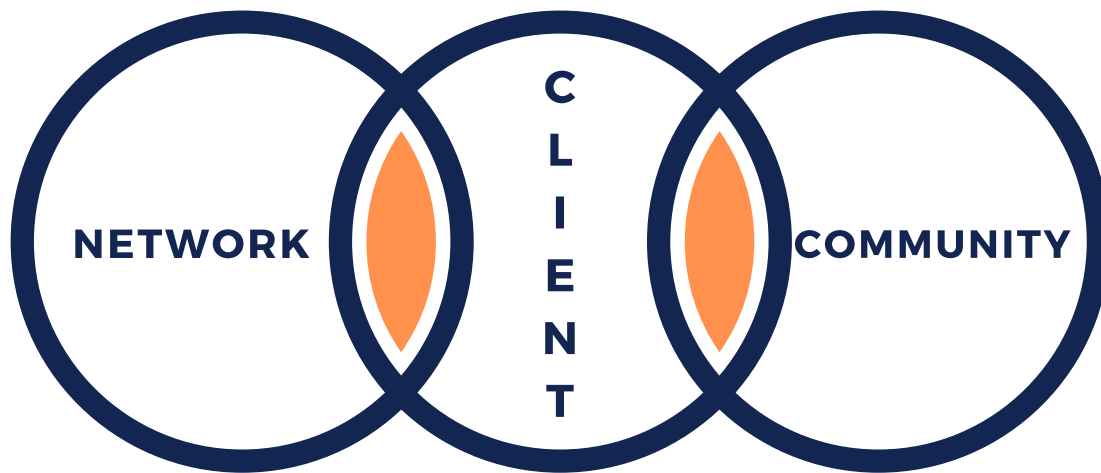
NeON Probation clients will pursue successful life pathways and engage in their community, enabling communities to be stronger and safer. NeON programs and services respond to client and community inputs and needs, resulting in client success in life and reduced recidivism as well as community member benefits and improved community public safety and criminal justice.



NeON Mission

NeON is a model of client and community engagement which creates opportunities for probation clients to connect with positive life pathways and their community, while strengthening the seven NeON communities in New York City. This Department of Probation model of service delivered in the seven NeON communities has three pillars:

3 MAIN PILLARS



Network

At the heart of the NeON is a network of partners – individuals and organizations, public and private – working together to improve public safety and promote the success of people on probation by working with them in neighborhood settings. DOP has renovated existing space where their offices were already in NeON neighborhoods (ex. South Bronx), moved into multi-service centers (ex. Harlem), or created a NeON satellites (ex. Castle Hill YMCA) where clients can access additional services. At NeON satellites, probation officers are co-located within community based organizations once or twice a week to serve residents in the neighborhoods where they live.

Client Engagement

NeON staff supervise and work with clients and their families in neighborhood settings to promote pro social life choices, attitude and behavior change, educational achievement, career advancement and active civic engagement.

Community Engagement

By working collaboratively with and within a network of partner organizations and individuals, DOP aimed to involve the community to find good solutions to complex client problems. In order to do this, NeON Stakeholder groups were formed enabling the department to work collaboratively with and within a network of partner organizations and individuals including residents, parents, clients, clergy, and business owners. NeON Stakeholders participate in a number of community-centered activities, for example; NeON Stakeholders determine the selection of NeON Arts and NeON Sports programs through a participatory grant distribution process.



NeON Stakeholder Group

The purpose of the NeON Stakeholder Group (NSG) is to provide guidance, support and leadership for the NeON's work to achieve community safety and successful outcomes for people on probation.

Research shows that collective efficacy is the most powerful influence keeping violent crime low. As such, the NSG helps to inform NeON's work in the local community by providing a platform where information, consultation, resources and recommendations are exchanged amongst the community stakeholders and the NeON.

In order to ensure that the NeONs are responsive to community needs, NeON stakeholder groups, comprised of interested people and organizations that live or work within the seven NeON communities were formed. They are made up of clergy, residents, clients, parents of clients, elected officials, business owners, probation staff, community based and grass roots organizations that are invested in the welfare and success of the residents in their neighborhood.

The NeON Stakeholder Groups have similar attributes, at the same time they each reflect the diversity of the neighborhood they represent. The unique dynamics of each neighborhood serves as the driving force for their varied strategic goals.



The NeON Stakeholder Groups are central to the New York City Department of Probation's community engagement strategy. Community members bring intimate knowledge and important insight into justice involved people and the issues they face in their community. By recognizing the community's voice and role in the process of advancing public safety the NeON has created an opportunity for authentic participation in the investment, planning and execution of strategies that will increase the likelihood of client success.

Each NeON Stakeholder Group chooses how to spend allocated funding in their community for NeON Arts, NeON Sports, Workforce Development Programs, and Civic Engagement. We build community capacity by empowering local stakeholder groups to choose projects for their own communities, run by local artists and organizations that may not have access to more traditional forms of funding and that have particular cultural competence in working within these communities.

Each NeON Stakeholder Group reflects the diversity of the neighborhood they represent. Creating opportunities for clients and other community members to interact is a key NeON strategy for reducing the stigma of criminal justice involvement, and anchoring clients within a village of support to reduce community disconnectedness and increase the chances of success for people on probation.



NeON Stakeholder Group Member

1. What is the role of the NeON Community Stakeholder?

The NeON Stakeholder Group is responsible for:

- Program Planning
- Services and Event Planning
- Communications and Community Outreach.
- The Stakeholder Group informs and validates the NeON mission and acts as an ambassador as well as a voice for NeONs in community.

2. What is the time requirement for a NeON Community Stakeholder?

Each NeON Community Stakeholder will be asked to participate on at least one of four committees and contribute 1-2 hours per month per committee.

3. What are the Benefits of being a NeON Community Stakeholder?

- **Community Impact** - You will make an impact in your Community and contribute to the unity in your community.
- You will experience the **satisfaction** of making a difference in the lives of others.
- You will receive great **training** and a great **leadership experience**.
- You will build skills that can **enhance your career**.
- You will be recognized as a Community leader by **NYC Mayor's Office** and **NYC Probation Commissioner**.

AND

***You will live longer, be healthier and happier...
Volunteer research says that is true!***

[Sign Up Here](https://www.nyc.gov/neon)

www.nyc.gov/neon



OPPORTUNITIES



Animation & Therapy

The Made in NY Animation Project offers NYC youth the opportunity to engage in storytelling, gain technical skills in 3D computer animation, and qualify for paid internships in the field. The program is an initiative of the NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment in partnership with NYC Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON), and The Animation Project (TAP). The Made in NY Animation Project is designed to: provide 3D animation classes to 1,800 NYC youth ages 12-24 across the five boroughs in NeONs and participating schools near the NeONs; introduce young animators to paid internship and certification opportunities; and, address projected workforce needs within New York City's growing media industries.

NeON Animation Lab Locations

Brooklyn, 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street | **Harlem, 127 West 127th Street**
Jamaica Queens, 162-24 Jamaica Ave | **South Bronx, 198 East 161 Street**
Staten Island, 340 Bay Street



Made in NY Animation Project

nyc.gov/animationproject



A program of the NYC Mayor's Office of Media & Entertainment in partnership with the Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeONSM)



OPPORTUNITIES

NeON Nutrition Kitchens

NeON Nutrition Kitchens, are the result of a partnership between the NYC Department of Probation, Food Bank For New York City and the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City that seeks to help close the meal gap for food insecure individuals and families. During COVID-19 the Nutrition Kitchens became even more critical serving over **240,000** people in the first 9 months of 2020.



NeON Sports

NeON Sports offers free swimming, basketball, tennis, horseback riding, gymnastics and other sports programs to young New Yorkers, including those on probation. Offered in seven locations citywide, NeON Sports programs build confidence, enhance social skills and increase motivation to succeed in the classroom, while teaching the benefits of goal-setting and practice.



Onsite Education

In Partnership with the Department of Education High School Equivalency Diploma (HSE) classes are offered at the Bronx and Staten Island NeON for residents of these communities regardless of their justice involvement.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



OPPORTUNITIES

NeON Photography

NeON Photography is a free, citywide photography training class, offered at each NeON in partnership with the Seeing for Ourselves nonprofit, and sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts.



NeON Inspires

NeON Inspires is a youth led, youth facilitated conversation with people of influence who are at the top of their respective field. These conversations are hosted in front of a live audience and are recorded by the NeON youth production team and shared digitally through the Carnegie hall website and a host of other social media outlets.



NeON Works

Three main services along with wraparound supports as needed:

- Professional development and career exploration workshops
- Individualized needs assessment
- Supports through connections to programs that result in one of the following outcomes:
 - (a) high school equivalency (HSE) credential attainment,
 - (b) college enrollment,
 - (c) enrollment in a college pathway program (e.g., CUNY Start),
 - (d) job placement, or (e) training that leads to a high-quality credential proven to assist with job placement.



NeON Works



OPPORTUNITIES

FREE VERSE

Free Verse is a workshop of poetry, story, art and song that turns waiting time into creative time. Free Verse takes place every Thursday at the South Bronx NeON from 2-6PM and produces an annual magazine filled with intriguing poetry written by clients, other community members and NeON staff.



Clothing Closets

The right clothes can help give people on probation the confidence to stay positive and keep moving forward. That's why we offer gently used business attire, casual clothes, shoes and accessories in five NeON Clothing Closets throughout the five boroughs.



Grants

The NeON uses a community-focused participatory budget model that enhances civic engagement. NeON communities have an integral decision-making role in selecting grantees for NeON Arts, NeON Sports, Workforce Development and Civic Engagement Programs.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



NeON Statistics

6,000+

**CLIENTS SERVED
ANNUALLY**

Each year approximately 6,000 people on probation are served through the NeONs across the city.

150+

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Each year the NeON hosts over 150 public facing events, Includes, Health and Harmony Day, MINY Animation Project Screenings, NeON Arts, NeON Sports, Rap Sheet Clean Up, Voter Registration, Community Street Jam, Family Days, Back To School Events

\$6.5M

**ANNUAL PROGRAM
INVESTMENT**

A mix of public and private Funding includes: NYC DOP, NYC City Council, NYC Young Men's Initiative, NYC DCLA, NYC CEO, Pinkerton Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts., Staten Island Foundation, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, Kresge Foundation, NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment



NeON Statistics

7,600+

MINY ANIMATION PROJECT

The MINY Animation Project uses digital art technology in a group therapy setting to improve emotional well-being by engaging youth in a therapeutic process to enhance interpersonal skills and develop job readiness through instruction in industry-standard technologies. Funding provided by the NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment

500,000+

NUTRITION KITCHENS

NeON Nutrition Kitchens help close the meal gap for food insecure individuals and families in the and has served over 500,000 since we first opened our doors in 2015.

14,000+

NeON Arts

Through a partnership with the NYC Department of Probation and Carnegie Hall, over 14,000 New York City residents, including those on probation have participated in 140 free art projects citywide including dance, music, film, poetry, mural painting, air brushing and more.

Beauty can be seen in all things,

NeON Photography





notes

NeON Stakeholder Group

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Thank You

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