

**Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice  
Testimony to the New York City Council  
Committee on Public Safety and Finance**

Good afternoon, Chair Hanks, Chair Brannan and members of the Committee on Public Safety and the Committee on Finance. My name is Deanna Logan, and I'm Director of the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ). I'm joined today by Nora Daniel, Chief of Staff, Candice Julien, Chief Operating Officer, and Sam Solomon, Deputy Director for Policy and Justice Operations. Thank you for the opportunity to testify about MOCJ's budget and priorities for this year.

MOCJ is the think tank and coordinating entity for the city's criminal justice system. We advise the Mayor on criminal justice policy and serve as the Mayor's representative to the courts, district attorneys, defenders, and state criminal justice agencies, among others. MOCJ works with law enforcement, city agencies, not-for-profits, foundations, and the public to implement data-driven anti-crime strategies and promote the operation of a fair justice system. These include projects to address current crime conditions, prevent offending, and build strong neighborhoods that ensure enduring safety.

MOCJ teams work along a public safety continuum grounded in supporting healthy neighborhoods that promote safety. We are committed to working with all of our partners to design and implement solutions that strike the right balance between enforcement that promotes accountability and the interventions that afford healing and rehabilitation – all in pursuit of both safety and justice. The executive budget has MOCJ funded for a total of \$10 million in personnel and operating costs. MOCJ is budgeted to distribute \$600 million in human services contracts that support the efficient operation of the criminal justice system and public safety. In order to meet our mission, we are staffed with professionals in various teams – that includes policy, justice operations, alternatives to incarceration, reentry, transitional housing, Office of Crime Victim Supports, Office to Prevent Hate Crimes, and the Office of Special Enforcement, all anchored by work conducted by our research team to support the Mayor's vision of keeping New York the safest big city in America.

As MOCJ concentrates its efforts to focus on those entities that most directly touch the criminal court system, we transitioned our Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) team to work under the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) to continue its work of establishing the sustainable supports that are the building blocks of healthy communities. ONS works to prevent individuals from entering the criminal justice system. It empowers individuals of the neighborhoods most negatively impacted by gun violence and crime. ONS invests resources, fosters engagement in the civic processes and reclaims spaces to lay the building blocks of healthy strong neighborhoods.

As Mayor Adams has clearly stated, housing stability is a fundamental building block of public safety. In support of the Mayor's blueprint to create and preserve affordable housing, MOCJ's Office of Special Enforcement (OSE) brings together inspectors from the Department of Buildings, the Fire Department, and legal professionals who work daily to support maintenance of the housing stock by reclaiming housing units from illegal short term rentals. As the entity this Council, entrusted with the oversight and implementation of Local Law 18 of 2022 (LL18) OSE spent the last year diligently creating the registration system that affords structured safeguards for legal short-term rentals. We are proud to report that we are continuing to onboard staff, implement new

software, and answer constituent questions on short-term rental registration as we move into the enforcement period later this year.

We are fully committed to ensuring that the most vulnerable New Yorkers are also able to have a place to lay their heads. As Council may remember, during the height of the pandemic to meet the public health crisis and save lives, MOCJ mobilized partners to create emergency hotels that provided humane living spaces for individuals who were incarcerated on Rikers Island and people released from State Prisons. As we exit the COVID health crisis and employ lessons learned, we ended our emergency housing initiative and moved to a more sustainable model of transitional housing. Headed by Yolanda Johnson-Peterkin, one of this year's recipients of the Sloan Public Service Award honoring exemplary public service, we are ensuring that housing for people with criminal justice involvement meets the individuals where they are, by providing the interventions and wrap-around services specific to the person. Our transitional housing incorporates the immediacy that we understood all too clearly from the public health crisis as critical to successful transition for individuals with a key focus on allowing the person to build a stable foundation that allows them to move into permanent housing.

In the last few months, our transitional housing work with key partners focused on the Open Minds, Open Doors campaign to ask New Yorkers with permanent rental units to open their minds and their hearts to those individuals with criminal justice history that are ready to start the next chapter of their lives. This education campaign has successfully reached landlords and brokers across the city and provided opportunities for landlords and brokers to interview and accept as tenants, people in need of a second chance.

Education is a key component of MOCJ's ability to support safety in New York City. Our Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes (OPHC) plays a critical role in coordinating the prevention and response to hate crimes and bias incidents. As hate crimes rose during the public health emergency, OPHC mobilized its networks of community groups and leaders and bolstered its commitment to inform and heal the public. The office is implementing Mayor Adams' Breaking Bread, Building Bonds initiative to bring individuals together from different backgrounds to share a meal and find common ground. Participants from events provide overwhelmingly positive feedback and more and more New Yorkers are volunteering to host additional dinners along with elected officials not-for-profits and philanthropic organizations. OPHC also implements the Partners Against the Hate (PATH) initiative, through which partner organizations implement community-based anti-hate initiatives, including programs that will highlight women and girls.

Complimenting the work of OPHC, our Office of Crime Victim Services maintains services for crime victims across the city while innovatively working pursuant to a federal technical assistance program grant with our partners in the Office of the Kings County District Attorney, NYPD, our sister mayoral unit, ENDGBV, and Help R.O.A.D.S. to develop an intersectional model that addresses the danger of intimate partner violence as it overlaps with gun violence. Currently the initiative is focused on the 73<sup>rd</sup> precinct and the goal is to develop a framework that not only could be deployed across the city but serve as a national model.

The foundation of our work is data. Our Research Innovation and Policy teams identify concerns that may be a barrier to public safety. Under Mayor Adams' leadership, the City's public safety

agencies began a new collaboration to align crime data across the city. MOCJ, NYPD, and the Department of Correction (DOC), and many providers of city services work together to coordinate data to produce a more accurate picture of public safety and public health within the criminal justice framework of New York City. MOCJ has a longstanding relationship with the Office of Court Administration's data team that both drives the data that is available and helps to analyze criminal justice trends. In addition to our sister city and state agencies, MOCJ also works with partner service providers and justice-involved people to obtain, review, and analyze quantitative and qualitative data to inform the city government's criminal justice work.

Our unprecedented collaboration across multiple data streams allows us to identify and propose solutions to our city's most difficult public safety challenges. As we know, public safety is interconnected and holistic, and our data-driven public safety interventions reflect this principle. We design, implement and fine-tune initiatives that reflect our understanding that public safety is a common goal of all New Yorkers and requires cooperation by all. Our interventions are specifically designed to promote public safety by providing services that help to keep people from entering or returning to jail or prison. The interventions include case processing, supervised release, alternatives to incarceration, reentry services, and housing initiatives.

MOCJ is committed to implementing Mayor Adams' vision of an innovative public safety apparatus that includes initiatives designed to promote the more efficient operation of the criminal justice system. As we know, delays in the criminal justice system are an injustice to both the accused and victims. MOCJ is currently developing, along with one of our partners, the Center for Justice Innovation (CJI), an initiative to facilitate better case processing. Pursuant to this initiative, CJI will begin individually assessing cases of people who are incarcerated. CJI will identify to both the District Attorneys and Defense Counsel eligible programming and jail alternatives for the cases they review that appear amenable to the services. The goal of this initiative is to work across agencies and stakeholders to decrease logjams and identify systemic barriers to case resolution and provide greater opportunities for case disposition. We were happy to work with the Council on Intro 806-A, which codifies this initiative, and we look forward to reporting on the eventual results of the initiative.

In 2016, New York City launched Supervised Release citywide, offering judges the option of releasing appropriate and eligible individuals under specific supervisory conditions in lieu of setting bail. Supervised Release is designed to reasonably assure court attendance and engage participants in social services that may sustain past the duration of one's case. Participants in Supervised Release are required to report to program case managers regularly and are offered court reminders and case management services, including connections to mental health, addiction, employment, and peer services. MOCJ currently contracts with four organizations to provide supervised release management citywide. The current overall value of these contracts for FY 23 is \$67 million.

Innovative public safety strategies like the jail population review work will work to supplement the core strategies and tools that allow the court system to ensure its ability to maintain efficient and just operation.

Alternative to Incarceration (ATI) programs are court-mandated diversion programs that provide participants with supportive services in their communities instead of a jail or prison sentence. ATI programs are key components of the city's investment in reducing the court's reliance on

incarceration. MOCJ currently has \$34 million in contracts in FY 23 with 14 non-profit organizations to run 24 ATI programs throughout New York City. Our city ATI programs provide behavioral health services, mental health and substance use treatment, counseling, job readiness, education assistance, benefits enrollment, and case management. Overall, approximately 5,660 people were served by our ATI programs from July 1, 2022, through March 31, 2023 (the first 9 months of in FY 23).

For those individuals that complete a sentence of incarceration and are returning home to their community ready to start the next chapter of their lives as New Yorkers, MOCJ's reentry programming—the Community Justice Reentry Network (CJRN)—works to provide a supportive transition including release planning in jail and prison. We invest over \$26 million each year into programming, which builds upon the success of the Jails to Jobs reentry services program that was launched in 2018. During incarceration and upon release, interested individuals work with reentry mentors who help facilitate all aspects of reentry on an individualized basis. The reentry mentors develop relationships with released individuals to encourage participation in relevant services and programs. The supports provided by the 10 CJRN service providers consist of wraparound resources determined by the specific needs of each returning individual including: paid short term employment, job training, career certifications, connections to permanent employment, and holistic wraparound services including mental, behavioral, and physical healthcare, family support and reunification, benefits assistance, case management, and education and housing support. The case planning and coordination during incarceration, combined with robust service offerings in the community help to ease the path to a stable life outside of custody and reduce the likelihood of return.

As I conclude, I'd like to reiterate what I hope has been clear from my testimony: investing in people is an investment in public safety. We continue to strive towards a safer, fairer criminal justice system. We look forward to continuing our progress over the coming fiscal year. Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony on MOCJ's work, and I'm happy to answer any questions.