

**Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice
Testimony to the New York City Council
Committee on Public Safety
Executive Budget Hearing
May 11, 2022**

Good afternoon Chair Hanks and members of the Committee on Public Safety. My name is Deanna Logan, and I'm Director of the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ). I'm joined today by Osvaldo Cruz, MOCJ's Chief Financial Officer, and Nora Daniel, MOCJ's Chief of Staff. Thank you for the opportunity to testify about MOCJ's budget and priorities for this year.

MOCJ advises the Mayor on criminal justice policy and is 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 effective strategies that make the City safer by improving system coordination. MOCJ brings together community and institutional stakeholders to address the systemic issues that undermine the safety and stability of our neighborhoods. MOCJ strives to move our City forward by providing better resources and the access to supports needed to promote and maintain healthy communities for all New Yorkers. Our office is committed to implementing Mayor Adams' vision for a safe and fair City for all New Yorkers.

MOCJ's teams all work along a public safety continuum that supports the healthy neighborhoods that create safety. Our interventions, programs, and services range from public health- informed community models implemented by the Office of Neighborhood Safety to the system coordination work conducted by our Crime Strategies team. MOCJ also includes the Office of Special Enforcement, the Office of Crime Victim Supports, and the Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes.

The Office of Special Enforcement (OSE) enforces the City's multiple dwelling law, which helps to maintain our affordable housing stock. In February of this year, OSE announced a \$1.1 million dollar settlement on the Upper West Side. OSE's efforts paved the way for 82 affordable housing units for low income and formerly incarcerated New Yorkers.

The Office of Crime Victim Supports (OCVS) has now absorbed the Crime Victims Assistance Program, which is the City's largest crime victim services program. In the last year, OCVS has also expanded its Abusive Partner Intervention Program (APIP) which provides court-mandated interventions to female and male-identified individuals who have engaged in intimate partner violence, helping to break cycles of abuse in intimate relationships.

The Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes has played a critical role coordinating prevention and response to hate crimes. As hate crimes have risen in the City, OPHC's cultivated networks of over a hundred community organizations and city agencies have

mobilized to educate New Yorkers on hate and bias, provide community-based and culturally competent responses to hate and bias incidents, and to foster healing. OPHC's P.A.T.H. Forward Initiative has provided \$2.4 million in critical funding to directly support and uplift grassroots work with some of our most vulnerable communities.

Reducing Unnecessary Incarceration

MOCJ's programs and services reinforce and support enhanced public safety, while maintaining fairness and reducing reliance on the carceral system. Court-mandated programs like Supervised Release, Alternatives to Incarceration, and the Abusive Partner Intervention Program are all valuable options provided at various points in the justice system. In addition, MOCJ has implemented enhanced re-entry services through the Community Justice Reentry Network. I'll elaborate further on our programs below.

Alternatives to Incarceration

Alternative to Incarceration 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 \$32 million in contracts in FY 22 with 15 non-profit organizations to run 24 ATI programs throughout New York City. In 2017, the City increased its investment in ATI programs to serve approximately 5,500 people, as well as to provide additional behavioral health services to ATI participants and housing resources for women enrolled in ATI programs. In 2020, the City expanded its ATI programs even further to provide additional supportive services to more fully address participants' needs. Overall, the number of people served by ATI programs is expected to increase from about 4,000 annually in 2012 to about 6,300 annually in 2022. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these programs were able to redirect many of their services to remote models, furnishing ATI clients with cell phones and other means to engage in services safely during our public health emergency.

Supervised Release

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 three organizations to provide supervised release citywide. The current overall value of these contracts for FY 22 is \$72 million. MOCJ issued an RFP and new awards for the supervised release system in FY 22.

Re-entry

Over the past few years, we have seen some promising reductions in returns to jail. While these reductions are encouraging, the numbers of those who return are still too high. We are currently making significant investments in services, and reshaping of the way we deliver those services to ensure they are effective. These investments and their effective deployment will be key in reducing the return rate further.

MOCJ has expanded its re-entry programming to improve transition and release planning and services. The City has invested \$20 million into this new programming, which builds upon the success of the Jails to Jobs re-entry services program that was launched in 2018. During their incarceration in jail or prison, individuals work with transition coordinators to create discharge plans for when they are released, as well as working with reentry mentors who help facilitate their reentry process on an individualized basis. The reentry mentors develop relationships with released individuals to encourage participation in relevant services and programs. The supports provided by this team of service providers include assistance locating temporary or permanent stable housing, mental healthcare, substance use treatment, counseling, paid transitional employment, job training, career certifications, and education assistance among other services depending on the specific needs of each returning individual. MOCJ is also contracting with Unite NYC, a web-based referral management platform and service directory that streamlines service referrals among providers to ensure that individuals are quickly connected with the right services to meet their needs. We anticipate that the case planning and coordination, combined with expanded service offerings and stronger relationships will help to ease the path to a stable life outside of DOC and DOCCS custody and reduce the likelihood of return. Additionally, in order to maximize safety during the public health emergency, MOCJ worked with agency and non-profit partners to stand up an entirely new set of services in under-enrolled hotels in NYC. Beginning in late March 2020, MOCJ worked with the New York City Office of Emergency Management and non-profit partners Exodus and Housing Works to provide emergency re-entry housing to clients leaving jail and prison and providing medical and wraparound services to individuals in the emergency reentry hotels. These hotels have been vital to maintaining safety as we transition out of the pandemic, and we are incredibly proud of the work done by MOCJ staff and our providers to ensure that those leaving custody had a safe, secure place to go.

Close Rikers

MOCJ continues to work with DOC, DDC, and other city partners to close Rikers Island, and to implement a fairer smaller jails plan across four boroughs. The updated completion date on full implementation is August 2027. As demolition of current jails moves forward, MOCJ and city agency partners have met regularly with Council Members and local communities to help maintain communication channels among all stakeholders.

Building Strong Neighborhoods and Improving Public Safety

Office of Neighborhood Safety

Research has shown that strong neighborhoods are an essential component of sustained improved public safety. The Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) and its public health approach to public safety were codified by this body last year. ONS, which is comprised of the Mayor's Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety (MAP), the Office to Prevent Gun Violence and Atlas, leverages City investments to supporting communities by helping residents co-produce lasting public safety. The MAP program was launched in 2014, and currently operates in 15 NYCHA developments citywide that had historically experienced high crime rates. Over 7 years, the MAP program has proven to be an effective driver of change in communities.

Mayor's Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety (MAP)

Housed within MOCJ's Office of Neighborhood Safety, The Mayor's Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety enlists residents, City agencies and community-based partners to help address the factors underlying safety. Through NeighborhoodStat, MAP harnesses the collective expertise of residents, government and community partners to drive change at both the neighborhood and administrative levels. MAP's work helped to develop the strong community infrastructure that allowed NeighborhoodStat remote model to successfully respond to the challenges of the pandemic.

In addition to the investments in building strong neighborhoods, lasting public safety also requires investing in non-enforcement methods of interrupting cycles of violence. The Office to Prevent Gun Violence employs a multi-pronged approach to improve public safety by interrupting the cycles that lead to gun violence.

Office to Prevent Gun Violence (OPGV)

OPGV launched in 2017 and works to address gun violence through a shift in social norms and the work of community members in mediating disputes to prevent shootings. The core component of OPGV's work is through the Crisis Management System (CMS), which deploys teams of credible messengers — community members whose backgrounds allow them to connect with and motivate at-risk individuals — to 31 sites where they mediate conflicts on the street and New Yorkers to services that can create peace and support healing. These include a year- round employment program, mental health services, trauma counseling, and other opportunity-centered resources.

Atlas

Atlas is a new voluntary program that strives to connect court-involved individuals to employment, social, and therapeutic services. The program ensures that credible trusted outreach staff from affected communities are responsible for program recruitment and provision. Service providers are local community-based organizations who have the relationships and specific knowledge to effectively recruit and engage program participants.

As I conclude, I'd like to re-iterate what I hope has been clear from my testimony which is that public safety is fundamentally a co-production with citizens. New Yorkers are the most important factor in maintaining and improving our City's public safety. While we are still striving towards a safer, fairer criminal justice system, we believe that the investments made will continue to help keep our City safe, and help New Yorkers to create healthy thriving communities. Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony on MOCJ's work, and I'm happy to answer any questions.