



**NEW YORK CITY  
BOARD OF CORRECTION**

**OCTOBER 8, 2024 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

**ATTENDEES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dwayne C. Sampson, Chair  
Helen Skipper, Vice Chair  
Robert L. Cohen, M.D., Member  
Hon. Barry A. Cozier (Ret.), Member  
Felipe Franco, Member  
Jacqueline Pitts, Member  
Joseph Ramos, Member  
Jude Torchenaud, Member

**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION (DOC)**

Sherrie Ann Rembert, Bureau Chief/Chief of Staff  
James Conroy, Deputy Commissioner of Legal Matters/General Counsel  
James Boyd, Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Operations  
James Saunders, Deputy Commissioner of Health Affairs  
Allison Pace, Associate Commissioner, Facility Operations  
Kathleen Zadzora, Assistant Commissioner, Health Affairs  
Allie Robertson, Executive Director, Intergovernmental Affairs  
Jenelle Bazil-Charles, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Intergovernmental Affairs  
Mark Pauley, Senior Policy Analyst  
Annais Morales, Press Secretary

**NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS – CORRECTIONAL HEALTH SERVICES (CHS)**

Patsy Yang, DrPH, Senior Vice President  
Jeanette Merrill, MPH, Senior Assistant Vice President, Communications & External Affairs  
Carlos Castellanos, Chief Operations Officer/Deputy Executive Director  
Nancy Arias, RN, Chief Nursing Officer/Deputy Executive Director  
Bipin Subedi, Chief Medical Officer/Senior Assistant Vice President

Zachary Rosner, Chief of Service, Medicine  
Joseph Otonichar, Chief of Service, Mental Health  
Nicole Levy, Director of Communications and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Sophia Dillon  
Virginia Finera  
Richenda Kours

**CORRECTION OFFICERS' BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION**

Antoinette Anderson, Third Vice President  
Vanessa Quinones, Bronx Borough Trustee

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Chaplain Dr. Victoria A. Phillips, Visionary V Ministries  
Graham Raymond, NY Daily News  
Jennifer J. Parish, Urban Justice Center/Jails Action Coalition/HALT  
Ryan Acquavotta, Freedom Agenda  
Stephanie Holmes, NYC Bar Association  
Jeffrey Severe, Public Advocates Office  
Tarini Garimella, Osborne  
Gina Mitchell, Queens Defenders  
Katja Bignall-Daly, Queens Defenders  
Michael Klinger, Brooklyn Defender Services  
Natalie Fiorenzo, NYCDS  
Khari Jenkins, NYCDS  
Casey Dalporto, NYCDS  
Roya Touran, NYCDS  
Stan Geron, NYCDS  
Bacook Abbasi, Revcore Recovery  
Luke Swanson

**Approval of October 8, 2024 Meeting Agenda**

Chair Dwayne Sampson called the meeting to order with a quorum of members present. Chair Sampson requested a motion to approve the agenda of the Board's October 8, 2024. Board Member Cohen requested an amendment to add individualized involuntary lock-in ("deadlock") to the agenda. Upon being approved and seconded, the amended agenda was approved unanimously (Chair Sampson, Vice Chair Skipper, and Board Members Cohen, Cozier, Franco, Ramos, Pitts, and Torchenaud voted in favor).

**Approval of the September 10, 2024 Public Meeting Minutes**

Chair Sampson requested a motion to approve the draft public meeting minutes of the Board’s September 10, 2024 meeting. Upon being moved and seconded, the minutes were approved (Chair Sampson, Vice Chair Skipper, and Board Members Cohen, Cozier, Franco, Ramos, Pitts, and Torchenaud voted in favor).

### **Executive Director Update**

BOC Executive Director Jasmine Georges-Yilla shared condolences with the families of Department of Correction (“Department” or “DOC”) staff who have passed since the September meeting [here](#).

As of October 6, 2024, the approximate total census of people in custody is 6,583. By facility, as of May 1: BHPW (47), EHPW (6), EMTC (1,545), GRVC (991), NIC (231), OBCC (1,446), RESH (171), RMSC (406), RNDC (1,070), and WF (669). See this portion of the video [here](#).

Regarding reporting, the Board plans to issue its heating monitoring report. Additionally, BOC will issue a public report on the deaths of Anthony Jordan and Charizma Jones. Moreover, BOC will issue a report assessing the Department’s PREA complaint investigation process. See this portion of the video [here](#).

### **Sick Call Report Presentation**

BOC’s Assistant Executive Director of Research, Dr. Navena Chaitoo, presented findings and recommendations from BOC’s report on the “Utilization of Sick Call in New York City Jails.” See this portion of the video [here](#).

Board Member Cohen asked about reporting of sick calls by facility. Dr. Chaitoo stated the report did not distinguish by facility because of the data received from the Department. Board Member Cohen then asked whether the gradually decreasing population is reflected in the sick call findings. Dr. Chaitoo responded that the data reviewed was for calendar year 2023 and does not reflect a year-over-year comparison. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Board Member Franco asked about the BOC’s recommendations to the Department. Dr. Chaitoo stated she would defer to the Department, as they may have updates to share regarding BOC’s sick call recommendations. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Vice Chair Skipper discussed the BOC’s recommendation for developing a dashboard for sick calls and asked whether tablets could be utilized to access the sick call process. Dr. Chaitoo shared that BOC and DOC have been communicating about ways to operationalize the process and deferred to DOC to share as part of their updates. See this portion of the video [here](#).

## **Public Comment on “Deadlocking” in New York City Jails**

Former Clinical Supervisor under Correctional Health Services (“CHS”), Justyna Rzewinski, described a practice of Department officers working in Mental Observation (“MO”) units and PACE units at the George R. Vierno Center (“GRVC”) restricting the movement of mentally ill incarcerated individuals in their cells over an extended period. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Vice Chair Skipper stated that the allegations are serious and urged the Board to investigate this issue. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Board Member Cohen stated that the Mayoral Emergency Executive Orders (“EEO”) suspending BOC’s minimum standard 1-05(b), concerning involuntary lock-in, allows for unlimited lock-ins. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Board Member Torchenaud asked who determines the frequency and duration of involuntary lock-ins. Ms. Rzewinski stated that DOC makes the recommendations for involuntary lock-ins for people in custody. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Board Member Pitts asked if people in custody are involuntarily locked in for behavioral problems or mental illness. Ms. Rzewinski confirmed that involuntary lock-in is used for both purposes. Board Member Pitts then questioned how DOC can prevent CHS from providing cell-side medication to people in custody who are involuntarily locked in their cells. Ms. Rzewinski could not speak on behalf of CHS but stated that medical providers tried their best to ensure medication was provided in these instances. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Board Member Ramos asked if the designated mentally ill population was held in the Department’s custody or waiting to be transferred from the City’s jails to a state system. Ms. Rzewinski stated that the incarcerated population was in DOC’s custody. It took approximately four months for people in custody to be transferred to an Office of Mental Health (“OMH”) facility to be restored to fitness. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Vice Chair Skipper clarified that the practice of involuntary lock-in is not a clinical practice and is used exclusively by the Department as a punitive measure. Ms. Rzewinski confirmed that medical providers are not instructed to tell DOC staff to lock patients inside their cells. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Chair Sampson asked whether the Department and CHS can manage the mentally ill population in custody. Ms. Rzewinski stated that she believes the Department needs additional training to better identify the signs and symptoms of mental illness in people in custody. See this portion of the video [here](#).

## **Department of Correction Updates**

- a. DOC's Response to BOC's Sick Call Report
  - i. Deputy Commissioner of Health Affairs, James Saunders, stated the Department takes the Board's recommendations seriously and is working with CHS to develop a plan, which will be provided to the Board. See this portion of the video [here](#).
- b. People in Custody with Special Needs and Disabilities
  - i. Deputy Commissioner Saunders stated that the Department has a designated American with Disabilities Act ("ADA") staff member to ensure DOC maintains compliance with federal, state, and local laws and best practices. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - ii. Board Member asked for the Department's definition of cognitive disability, at what point the Department screens individuals with cognitive disabilities, what reasonable accommodations are made for individuals with mental disabilities, and what type of clinical support is provided. Deputy Commissioner Saunders reserved comment for CHS, as the Department does not diagnose individuals in custody. However, the Deputy Commissioner discussed the intake screening process as one measure for the Department to learn if a person in custody has a disability. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - iii. Board Member Pitts asked if any circumstances would prevent medication from being brought to an incarcerated individual's cell. Deputy Commissioner Saunders reserved comment for CHS. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - iv. Board Member Franco questioned whether the Department supports the cognitive needs of young adults with medical devices. Deputy Commissioner Saunders stated that young adults have access to medical personnel and social services; however, the Department of Education is better suited to respond regarding individualized programming. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - v. Chair Sampson asked about the Department's appeal process. Deputy Commissioner Saunders stated that approximately 9.3 percent of reasonable accommodation requests are denied and further explained the process that leads to a determination. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - vi. Vice Chair Skipper asked what security reasons would deny a person in custody's request for reasonable accommodation. Deputy Commissioner Saunders provided a few examples of impermissible items. See this portion of the video [here](#).

- vii. Board Member Ramos expressed interest in learning about policies and procedures for individuals who are deaf/hard-of-hearing. Deputy Commissioner Saunders stated that about 10 percent of the population requested a listening aid and described the devices available for deaf individuals in custody. Associate Commissioner of Facility Operations, Allison Pace, offered context on the new admission process. See this portion of the video [here](#).
- viii. Board Member Torchenaud asked how the Department services non-ambulatory individuals in custody. Deputy Commissioner Saunders stated that there is a specific unit for people in custody at the North Infirmery Command facility. See this portion of the video [here](#).
- c. Individualized Involuntary Lock-In (“Deadlock”)
  - i. Vice Chair Skipper asked the Department why “deadlock” is used punitively in correctional facilities. General Counsel James Conroy claims the term “deadlock” is not a common vernacular, and the Department is looking into the allegations of its use. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - ii. Executive Director Georges-Yilla asked if the General Counsel or other Department staff had observed lock-ins. General Counsel Conroy stated that Department leadership is unaware of the “deadlock” practice and has not seen it. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - iii. Chair Sampson shared remarks on the practice of “deadlocking” individuals, why it is concerns the Board, and his firsthand encounter with the practice. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - iv. Board Member Cohen stated that the mayor’s EEOs to suspend the Board’s minimum standards on lock-in significantly impact the population and asked why the Department continues to make this request. General Counsel Conroy stated that the Department would provide an answer later. See this portion of the video [here](#).

### **Correctional Health Services Updates**

- a. CHS’s Updates on the Board’s Sick Call Report Recommendations
  - i. Senior Vice President, Dr. Patricia Yang, explained that much of the Board’s recommendations centered on the Health Triage Line and emphasized that there are other pathways for a person in custody to be seen by a medical provider. See this portion of the video [here](#).
- b. CHS Services for Patients with Hearing/Vision Impairments and/or Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- i. Chief of Service, Medicine, Dr. Zachary Rosner, discussed audiology and optometry services for hearing and/or vision impaired patients. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - ii. Chief of Service, Mental Health, Dr. Joseph Otonichar, explained clinically-driven approaches to examine patients with neurodevelopmental and neurocognitive disorders. See this portion of the video [here](#).
- c. Individualized Involuntary Lock-In (“Deadlock”)
- i. Vice Chair Skipper asked about the policy for cell-side medication in PACE and Mental Observation units. Dr. Otonichar explained some of the challenges since patients should be escorted to the clinic for medical staff to directly observe therapy. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - ii. Vice Chair Skipper asked whether medical and mental health staff have raised concerns about “deadlocking” patients. Dr. Otonichar stated he heard the term several years ago and CHS has developed an escalation procedure for when individuals are involuntarily locked in their cells. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - iii. Chief Medical Officer and Senior Assistant Vice President, Dr. Bipin Subedi, states that CHS escalates these matters when there are barriers for individuals to access their medication. Typically, CHS’s staff in the housing units try to overcome any barriers, but if unsuccessful, then different methods of escalation are implemented. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - iv. Board Member Pitts inquired about access to medication and further clarification on cell-side medication. Dr. Subedi explained that CHS will attempt to give a patient their medicines or try to understand why the person has not been given cell-side medication and work on escalating the matter. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - v. Board Member Franco asked for clarification on CHS’s escalation process. Dr. Subedi stated that there are escalation pathways for clinical, operational, the Department, and outside the facility. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - vi. Board Member Franco asked if CHS has the capacity and expertise to treat young adult patients with mental illness adequately. Dr. Otonichar stated that CHS recently recruited a psychiatrist who specializes in adolescent psychiatry. See this portion of the video [here](#).
  - vii. Vice Chair Skipper asked about the differentiation of medications—medical versus psychotropic—that are not delivered to patients when placed on “deadlock” status. Dr. Subedi states that it could be either medical or psych medication not delivered but there are procedures in place that will help to identify the type of medication not delivered. See this portion of the video [here](#).

- viii. Chair Sampson asked CHS if there was any opposition to the issues raised regarding access to medication while a patient is “deadlocked” and whether DOC and CHS can provide adequate care for a mentally ill individual in custody. Dr. Subedi did not deny the allegations and stated that the programs developed by CHS are effective and help patients. See this portion of the video [here](#).
- d. Other Items
  - i. Board Member Torchenaud asked about the Psychiatric Services and Clinical Knowledge Enhancement System (“PSYCKES”). Dr. Otonichar stated it is a helpful resource developed by New York State that contains medical information on Medicaid enrollees, patient-specific treatment histories, and data entered by providers and patients. See this portion of the video [here](#).

### **Correction Officers’ Benevolent Association Updates**

- a. Third Vice President, Antoinette Anderson, provided an overview of the sick call process from a uniformed officer’s perspective and the challenges DOC staff encounter daily. Next, Ms. Anderson provided context on how DOC officers learn of a person in custody’s disability in the new admission process. Additionally, Ms. Anderson stated the Department is not trained to handle the mentally ill population. Lastly, Ms. Anderson stated that the correction officers do not have the authority to “deadlock” incarcerated individuals. See this portion of the video [here](#).

### **Public Comment**

- A. In-Person Public Comment
  - i. The Board heard public comments from Michael Klinger (Brooklyn Defenders), Dr. Victoria Phillips (Visionary V Ministries), Jennifer Parish (UJC/JAC/HALT), and Natalie Fiorenzo (NYCDS). The public comments portion of this video recording is available [here](#).
- B. Virtual Public Comment
  - i. The Board heard virtual public comments from Kayla Simpson (Legal Aid Society), Eileen Maher (Vocal NY), and Daniele Gerard (Children’s Rights). See this portion of the video [here](#).

### **Proposed Resolution to Amend Art. VI § 4 of the Board’s Bylaws**

Chair Sampson asked Executive Director Georges-Yilla to read the first resolution before the Board. The resolution proposes that Board members participate in the work of the Board’s committees, no Board member may simultaneously as chair on more than two committees, and Board members may simultaneously serve as committee members on



more than two committees. Upon being moved and seconded, a roll call vote was taken, and Chair Sampson, Board Member Cozier, Board Member Pitts, Board Member Ramos, and Board Member Torchenaud voted in favor of the resolution. Vice Chair Skipper, Board Member Franco, and Board Member Cohen did not vote in favor of the resolution. The resolution passed. See this portion of the video [here](#).

### **Proposed Resolution to Establishing a Minimum Standards Review Committee and a Personnel Practices Committee**

Chair Sampson asked Executive Director Georges-Yilla to read the second resolution before the Board. The resolution proposes the Board will establish a Minimum Standards Review Committee to review the Minimum Standards and make recommendations accordingly and establish a Personnel Practices Committee to review business practices of organizational structures and operational practices of the Board, and Board staff must adhere to requests for information and meetings with the Committee. No motion was moved, and therefore, the resolution failed. See this portion of the video [here](#).

### **Proposed Resolution to Establishing a 2025 Board Priorities Committee**

Chair Sampson asked Executive Director Georges-Yilla to read the final resolution before the Board. The resolution proposes that the Board establish a committee to set the Board's priorities for the year 2025 regarding measuring the Department's and Correctional Health Services' compliance with minimum standards and other areas of departmental performance related to the conditions of the City's jails. Upon being moved and second, Vice Chair Skipper, Board Member Franco, and Board Member Cohen voted in favor of the resolution. Chair Sampson, Board Member Cozier, Board Member Pitts, Board Ramos, and Board Member Torchenaud did not vote in favor of the resolution. The resolution failed. See this portion of the video [here](#).