

Heat Mitigation Efforts in NYC Jails

NYC BOARD OF CORRECTION ANALYSIS OF SUMMER 2024 DATA
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Executive Summary

Pursuant to §§626(c) and (h) of the New York City Charter, the New York City Board of Correction (BOC) assessed the performance of the New York City Department of Correction's (DOC) heat mitigation plan, which mandates regular temperature checks and the provision of relief measures such as fans, ice, and increased access to cool showers and hydration in non-air-conditioned areas when outdoor temperatures exceed 85°F (or 80°F after August 3, 2024). This report evaluates the implementation of these procedures during the summer months, covering eight facilities on Rikers Island.

Key findings include:

- **Full Compliance with Ice and Fan Provision:** DOC was in 100% compliance with its requirement to provide ice and fans in non-air-conditioned areas visited by BOC when outdoor temperatures exceeded the specified thresholds. However, despite this compliance, feedback from people in custody (PIC) and correctional officers (COs) indicated ongoing discomfort.
- **Unaddressed Physical Discomfort:** Despite the provision of relief measures, many PICs and COs reported that conditions remained uncomfortable, highlighting the limitations of fans and ice in providing sufficient cooling, particularly in facilities with poor ventilation.

Based on these findings, BOC recommends the following:

1. DOC should **improve heat mitigation efforts by enhancing cooling options in non-air-conditioned areas.**
To do this, DOC should:
 - a. **Expand cooling solutions.** DOC should provide portable air conditioning units, where secure to do so, and misting systems in non-air-conditioned areas. Specifically, sufficient air conditioning units should be available for all heat sensitive persons by May 15, 2025. Furthermore, all housing areas should be served by effective air conditioning by May 15, 2026.
 - b. **Ensure consistent ventilation.** DOC should identify facilities with inadequate ventilation and, where possible, take measures to improve airflow, such as opening meal slots and windows.
2. DOC should **enhance its temperature monitoring and tracking capacity.** In particular, DOC should:
 - a. **Expand temperature monitoring.** DOC should expand temperature monitoring to include common (intake, recreation, religious, visitation, programming, etc.) in addition to housing areas (cells, dorms, dayrooms, etc.). Temperatures should be taken in housing and common areas daily.
 - b. **Implement real-time temperature tracking.** DOC should transition out of the practice of keeping paper logbooks and develop an electronic log system. The electronic system should capture information triggered at the individual cell level. Until such a system is implemented, Tour Commanders should articulate an action plan to regularly audit logbooks against Genetec video footage and Watch Tour data at unpredictable times to ensure that rounds are taking place as required and to detect incorrect entries.
 - c. **Track and analyze incidents related to heat exposure.**
 - i. DOC should begin tracking health incidents related to heat exposure during the summer months, including instances of referrals to Correctional Health Services (CHS) when PIC verbalize that they require medical attention because of the high temperature where they

are located. This data should be reviewed daily to identify areas where additional cooling measures may be needed.

- ii. DOC should also track incidents related to heat exposure in connection to malfunctioning heaters or radiators during the winter months, as high temperature generated by faulty equipment can also present health risks to PIC. DOC must immediately identify and repair such malfunctioning equipment and remove PIC from the affected area.
3. DOC should **improve the distribution of water and ice** during the summer months. To do this, DOC should install and track the usage of hydration stations that provide PIC and COs on-demand water and ice.
4. DOC should implement measures to **improve its documentation of overall preparedness** for the summer months. In particular, DOC should:
 - a. **Conduct and electronically document pre-summer equipment and housing areas checks.** DOC should complete operational checks of all cooling equipment (fans, air conditioners, misting units, and hydration stations) by May 15 of each year. This includes replacing or repairing broken equipment and documenting the operational status in an electronic database. DOC should maintain an electronic inventory of equipment critical to its cooling measures during the summer months and track allocation across all facilities. Additionally, DOC should thoroughly check and electronically document ventilation in all housing areas.
 - b. **Electronically document distribution of appropriate summer clothing.** DOC should ensure that all PIC and COs are provided with summer-appropriate clothing by June 1, with multiple sets available to allow regular changes. DOC should electronically track its distribution of summer-appropriate clothing.
5. DOC should aim to **improve the consistency and efficiency of its heat mitigation measures** during Summer 2025. DOC should track and report to BOC the following on a monthly basis during the heat mitigation period (May through September each year):
 - a. By facility, the total number and percent of PIC and COs in air-conditioned housing areas. Reporting on PIC should be further disaggregated by the number and percent of individuals who are heat sensitive versus not heat sensitive.
 - b. By facility, the total number and percent of PIC and COs in non-air-conditioned housing areas. Reporting on PIC should be further disaggregated by the number and percent of individuals who are heat sensitive versus not heat sensitive. DOC should also report the number and percentage of security overrides versus refusals for heat sensitive PIC who are housed in non-air-conditioned housing areas.
 - c. By facility, summary temperature statistics (minimum, median, mean, standard deviation, and maximum) for air-conditioned versus non-air-conditioned common and housing areas.
 - d. By facility, overall satisfaction with heat mitigation efforts. DOC should introduce a survey system to evaluate PIC and CO satisfaction with summer preparedness and cooling measures.

In alignment with New York City's commitment to close Rikers Island by 2027, it is also critical that DOC fully incorporate the recommendations concerning improving documentation of preparedness and reporting into the Borough-Based Jails (BBJ) operations plan. According to DOC and the New York City Department of Design and Construction infrastructure plans, BBJs will be air-conditioned in their entirety.

Introduction

In response to the risks posed by extreme summer heat in New York City jails, the New York City Department of Correction (DOC) regularly implements a heat mitigation plan for the summer months (see Appendix A for copies of DOC's teletypes regarding heat mitigation). In Summer 2024, this plan required frequent temperature monitoring by DOC staff and the provision of ice and fans when outdoor temperatures exceeded 85°F (later reduced to 80°F after August 3). Heat-related illnesses, such as dehydration, exhaustion, and heat stroke pose significant threats in jails, where access to cooling resources is limited, and many areas are not air-conditioned. The facilities monitored during this period included the Eric M. Taylor Center (EMTC), George R. Vierno Center (GRVC), North Infirmery Command (NIC), Otis Bantum Correctional Center (OBCC), Rose M. Singer Enhanced Supervised Housing (RESH), Rose M. Singer Center (RMSC), Robert N. Davoren Complex (RNDC), and West Facility (WF). Pursuant to §§626(c) and (h) of the New York City Charter, the New York City Board of Correction (BOC) also monitored temperatures in the facilities during Summer 2024 and assessed DOC's effectiveness in mitigating heat-related risks.

Background

The concern about the effect of high temperatures on the incarcerated population became particularly urgent following the death of Jerome Murdough on February 15, 2014. Murdough, a 56-year-old homeless veteran with a history of mental illness, was housed in a mental health observation unit on Rikers Island, where temperatures in his cell reportedly exceeded 100°F due to a malfunctioning radiator. He was left unattended for hours and later found unresponsive (The New York Times, 2014). His death, ruled heat-related despite occurring in the winter, sparked outrage and underscored the severe risks of extreme heat for incarcerated individuals, particularly those with pre-existing health conditions, prompting urgent calls for reform. This issue was further highlighted in the ongoing litigation surrounding *Benjamin v. Maginley-Liddie*, a class action lawsuit initially filed by the Legal Aid Society in 1975 that challenged a broad range of environmental conditions and practices in the New York City jail system, including fire risks, sanitation deficiencies, and ventilation system concerns. The *Benjamin* case has led to ongoing court orders requiring DOC to submit various reports on jail ventilation, including airflow, mechanical ventilation systems, and other related issues. In response to these concerns, the court has ordered DOC to maintain proper environmental conditions within facilities.

Beyond physical health issues, heat also exacerbates mental health issues, contributing to increased violence, self-harm, and psychological crises. Studies indicate a correlation between rising temperatures and spikes in behavioral issues in correctional settings (Anderson, 2001; Cloud et al., 2023; Kposowa & D'Auria, 2010). This heightened risk places additional strain on correctional staff and challenges efforts to maintain safety during the summer months. The Progress Report on Environmental Conditions (*Benjamin v. Maginley-Liddie*, 75 CIV. 3073), released on July 5, 2024 by the Office of Compliance Consultants (OCC), continues to identify significant deficiencies in the ventilation systems at DOC facilities, with OCC noting that "the majority of violations included vents that were excessively dirty, dusty, dust-laden, or clogged (with dirt or paint), and in some cases, no vent was provided or was obstructed." The report also explains that while there has been improved compliance with providing functioning mechanical ventilation, unexplained delays in completing basic maintenance tasks, such as cleaning vents and replacing belts (which are required to be cleaned weekly under the Environmental Order), persist as a significant concern.

In response to Murdough's case, the *Benjamin* litigation, and broader concerns about health and safety, DOC was compelled to implement stronger heat mitigation measures. The introduction of mandatory temperature monitoring protocols, along with measures such as distributing fans, ice, and providing extended shower access, arose from efforts to prevent future tragedies and ensure the protection of vulnerable individuals in custody. However, continued delays in addressing basic maintenance issues, as highlighted in the *Benjamin v. Maginley-Liddie* litigation, suggest that DOC's heat mitigation efforts remain a work in progress.

DOC Efforts

DOC reported several initiatives aimed at mitigating heat risks in its facilities during the summer months. These initiatives were presented as part of DOC's annual warm-weather protocol, which the department activates each May. BOC received this information on December 3, 2024, making it difficult to assess the timeliness or effectiveness of these measures during the summer of 2024.

According to DOC, their efforts include expanding air-conditioned and ventilated housing capacity, increasing the number of air-conditioned beds 58.0% from 6,290 in 2021 to 9,941 in 2024. These numbers are baselined to include currently closed facilities. In 2024, only 6,355 air-conditioned beds were in open facilities, representing 84.8% of DOC's total bed capacity of 7,490 at full occupancy¹. Furthermore, it appears that the 1,594 air-conditioned beds at RMSC, including RESH, are underutilized as the combined population is approximately one-third the total capacity of air-conditioned beds. The lower population density in these areas contributes to the underutilization of some of the available air-conditioned beds. While acknowledging the challenges involved in housing classifications and allocations, it is crucial that this data be used to ensure that the maximum number of PIC are housed in air-conditioned spaces, particularly given the risks posed by extreme heat. Similar to the relocation of Enhanced Supervision Housing to RMSC, DOC can consider opening other specialized units in the underutilized air-conditioned spaces of RMSC.

DOC also stated that it completed pre-summer equipment checks to ensure readiness for warmer conditions, though supporting documentation was not provided for these efforts. In addition to these measures, DOC also described measures to provide PIC with appropriate summer clothing. According to DOC, PIC admitted during the summer months receive uniform bundles that include short-sleeve tops and shorts² upon intake, along with two extra sets of t-shirts, underwear, and socks. However, DOC did not share information on efforts to systematically provide summer clothing to PIC admitted during the winter months. Furthermore, DOC's distribution of summer clothing does not include an additional pair of shorts, which BOC identified during qualitative interviews as essential for PIC to change into following recreation, where physical activity often results in perspiration.

Methods

BOC employed a mixed methods approach for this assessment, integrating both quantitative temperature data and qualitative feedback from correctional officers (COs) and people in custody (PIC). Mixed methods research allows for a more comprehensive understanding of DOC's heat mitigation strategy by combining numerical data with personal experiences and perception (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

¹ This data included the following closed facilities: the Anna M. Kross Center (AMKC); the George R. Motchan Detention Center (GMDC); and the Vernon C. Bain Center (VCBC).

² For PIC housed in RESH, security protocols require the use of short-sleeve jumpsuits instead of standard separates.

Quantitative

Quantitative data were collected across 64 days between Memorial Day and Labor Day 2024. The collection process was carefully randomized to ensure that data were gathered in a representative and balanced manner across both heat-sensitive and non-heat-sensitive areas. Each facility was toured eight times over the summer, with four visits conducted in heat-sensitive housing and four visits in non-heat-sensitive housing.

During their daily tours, BOC's monitoring staff recorded temperature readings³ and the provision of cooling measures⁴, such as fans and ice, using a standardized instrument developed by BOC's research team (see Appendix B for a copy of the instrument). Each day, BOC's research staff would review the data, ask any follow-up questions on the data received, and enter the data into an electronic database. This structured approach ensured a comprehensive evaluation, allowing BOC to accurately assess conditions across various housing types.

Qualitative

Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with both COs and PIC (see Appendix C for copies of these instruments). Interview questions focused on topics such as: preparedness, effectiveness, lived experiences, and recommendations for improvement. A phenomenological approach was employed to explore the lived experiences of these individuals, focusing on their experiences, how they perceived the effectiveness of DOC's heat mitigation measures, and their overall comfort during the summer heat (Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). This approach was selected due to its capacity to capture the rich, subjective experiences of participants, providing insights into both personal and collective responses to the heat conditions.

The interviews were conducted during facility visits and included a total of 16 completed interviews (8 PIC and 8 COs). Additionally, at least 26 other individuals informally contributed to the findings by corroborating the responses provided by interviewees (see Table 1). Research staff received acknowledgement of informed consent from all PIC who started (n=11) and completed (n=8) the interview (see Appendix D for a copy of the informed consent form).

Table 1: Breakdown of Total Number of Interview Participants

	Completed	Incomplete	Corroborations
PIC	8	3	≥ 15
Uniformed COs	8	0	11
TOTAL	16	3	≥ 26

Data Source: BOC analysis of administrative project data

Field notes were taken during each interview to capture non-verbal cues and context-specific details. This allowed the research team to supplement verbal responses with observations about the environment and the participants' reactions. By conducting interviews at all facilities and with a balanced group of participants (PIC and COs), the research team was able to capture diverse perspectives on DOC's heat mitigation efforts.

³ Staff routinely recorded outdoor and indoor temperatures (day rooms, dorms, modulars, or cells). During each of the four tours of heat-sensitive areas, staff recorded temperatures in the clinic and, where applicable, intake areas. During each of the four tours of non-heat-sensitive areas, staff recorded temperatures in one of the following areas: recreation, law library, religious, or visitation.

⁴ DOC's 2024 heat mitigation plan required cooling measures, such as fans and ice, in non-air-conditioned areas only when outdoor temperatures exceeded 85°F (or 80°F after August 3, 2024).

Triangulation

BOC used data triangulation to enhance the reliability of its findings by cross-referencing the temperature data with qualitative feedback from interviews and field notes (see Table 2). This triangulation provided a comprehensive view of DOC’s heat mitigation efforts by allowing the research team to identify discrepancies between the recorded data and the subjective experiences of individuals living and working in these environments (Martens & Hesse-Biber, 2012).

Table 2: Outdoor and Indoor Temperatures During Interviews

Date	Facility	Outdoor (°F)	Indoor (°F)	# Interviews
June 26, 2024	NIC	84	73	2
June 27, 2024	EMTC	74	87	2
July 9, 2024	RMSC	82	69	2
July 10, 2024	OBCC	82	95	2
July 16, 2024	WF	89	71	2
July 17, 2024	RNDC	82	91	2
July 23, 2024	GRVC	84	89	2
July 24, 2024	RESH	76	70	2

Data Source: BOC analysis of administrative project data

For qualitative analysis, data is typically collected until the researcher reaches saturation. Saturation occurs when researchers do not learn anything new (Fusch and Ness, 2015). For this project, the research staff reached saturation very quickly (n=5 interviews for each sample). This is in line with previous qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). However, to get a comprehensive understanding of the heat conditions and experiences throughout Rikers Island, the research staff continued interviews until at least one representative from both groups at each open facility was interviewed.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data allowed for a more holistic understanding of DOC’s heat mitigation efforts, offering both statistical insight into temperature control and a deeper appreciation of how those measures were experienced on the ground.

Findings

Quantitative

Census

BOC’s heat monitoring efforts were concentrated on the period between Memorial and Labor Day (May 31 through August 30, 2024) when summer temperatures are typically at its highest. As demonstrated in Table 3, the daily census of PIC grew 2.5% between May 1 and September 1, 2024. During this period, over half of all PICs were housed in air-conditioned units, and the proportion designated as heat-sensitive ranged from 14.6% to 25.2%. Although New York City Health + Hospitals/Correctional Health Services (CHS) assesses PIC for heat

sensitivity year-round, clinicians pay heightened attention to this issue in the lead-up to and during the summer months, accounting for the observed increase.

Table 3: Overall census, PIC housed in air-conditioned units, and PIC designated heat sensitive.

	5/1/2024 (N=6,306)	6/1/2024 (N=6,339)	7/1/2024 (N=6,435)	8/1/2024 (N=6,389)	9/1/2024 (N=6,466)
PIC housed in air-conditioned unit					
No	2,421 (38.4%)	2,444 (38.6%)	2,523 (39.2%)	2,519 (39.4%)	2,540 (39.3%)
Yes	3,885 (61.6%)	3,895 (61.4%)	3,912 (60.8%)	3,870 (60.6%)	3,926 (60.7%)
PIC designated heat sensitive					
No	5,387 (85.4%)	5,193 (81.9%)	4,765 (74.0%)	4,698 (73.5%)	4,836 (74.8%)
Yes	919 (14.6%)	1,137 (17.9%)	1,670 (25.9%)	1,691 (26.5%)	1,630 (25.2%)
Missing	0 (0.0%)	9 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

Data Source: DOC analysis of Inmate Information System Data

PIC who are identified during intake or upon subsequent diagnosis as having certain medical conditions⁵ or being prescribed certain medications⁶ are designated heat sensitive by CHS. Following identification, clinicians are instructed in CHS Policy #: INT 9 to print and sign a heat sensitivity form (CHS-205 NYC Health + Hospitals Receipt of Notification of Patient Need) and present it to DOC. The DOC Operations Order 9/20 specifies that all heat sensitive individuals should be housed in heat sensitive housing, which can maintain a temperature below eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit. PIC have the right to refuse heat sensitive housing. In these cases, DOC must ensure that the PIC is produced to the clinic for counseling with a CHS clinician. CHS will document the refusal in their electronic health record with notification to DOC if the PIC still refuses heat sensitive housing after counseling. DOC can also override heat sensitive housing if there are verified security concerns that require the individual to be used in a non-heat-sensitive housing unit. This override is typically approved by the DOC Health Affairs Unit.

Between May 1 and September 1, the proportion of PIC designated heat sensitive in non-air-conditioned housing units ranged from 21.0% to 17.0% (Table 4).

Table 4: Housing status of PIC designated heat sensitive.

	5/1/2024 (N=919)	6/1/2024 (N=1,137)	7/1/2024 (N=1,653)	8/1/2024 (N=1,691)	9/1/2024 (N=1,634)
Heat Sensitive PIC housed in air-conditioned housing area					
No	193 (21.0%)	245 (21.5%)	344 (20.5%)	309 (18.3%)	277 (17.0%)

⁵ These medical conditions include sickle cell disease, Parkinson’s disease, diabetes (Type 1 and 2), severe asthma, COPD, congestive heart failure or myocardial infraction, dementia, moderate to profound intellectual disability, age greater than or equal to 65 years, BMI greater than 35, documented history of hospitalization for heatstroke, appears confused (patient is determined by medical or mental health to be incapable of self-managing during periods of high heat because of their mental status), requires infirmary level care, or meets another clinical criteria that in the clinician’s judgement raises the risk of heat-related illness.

⁶ These medications include antipsychotics, antiparkinson’s, beta adrenergic antagonists, calcium channel antagonists, and diuretics.

Yes	726 (79.0%)	892 (78.5%)	1,326 (79.5%)	1,382 (81.7%)	1,353 (83.0%)
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Data Source: DOC analysis of Inmate Information System Data

DOC's data on PIC refusals and security overrides does not total the number of PIC who are heat sensitive but not housed in air-conditioned housing (Table 5).

Table 5: Total Number of Heat Sensitive PICs not in Heat Sensitive Housing

	5/1/2024 (N=39)	6/1/2024 (N=37)	7/1/2024 (N=83)	8/1/2024 (N=98)	9/1/2024 (N=95)
PIC Refusal	34 (87.2%)	32 (86.5%)	77 (92.8%)	93 (94.9%)	90 (94.7%)
Security Override	5 (12.8%)	5 (13.5%)	6 (7.2%)	5 (5.1%)	5 (5.3%)

Data Source: DOC analysis of Inmate Information System Data

Compliance

DOC's heat mitigation plan, in line with Teletype Order Number HQ -00955-0, required cooling measures (fans and ice) only when outdoor temperatures exceeded 85°F (reduced to 80°F after August 3, 2024). According to the data collected, DOC was in 100% compliance with providing ice and fans in non-air-conditioned housing areas during these high-heat periods.

However, despite this compliance, indoor temperatures in several non-air-conditioned housing units frequently exceeded safe levels, particularly in living spaces, where fans alone were insufficient to maintain comfort. These conditions were especially challenging in facilities like OBCC and RNDC, which recorded temperatures above 90°F (Table 6).

Table 6: Temperatures by Facility and Housing Type

		Temperatures (°F) of Heat-Sensitive Living Spaces (N=44)		Temperatures (°F) of Non-Heat-Sensitive Living Spaces (N=20)	
		Mean (SD)	Median [Min, Max]	Mean (SD)	Median [Min, Max]
EMTC	(N=8)	71.5 (2.52)	72.0 [68.0, 74.0]	79.5 (6.14)	78.5 [74.0, 87.0]
GRVC	(N=8)	73.0 (4.08)	74.5 [67.0, 76.0]	85.3 (1.89)	84.5 [84.0, 88.0]
NIC*	(N=8)	70.4 (5.40)	71.0 [59.0, 78.0]		
OBCC	(N=8)	70.0 (2.94)	69.5 [67.0, 74.0]	82.3 (9.81)	81.0 [72.0, 95.0]
RESH*	(N=8)	69.1 (2.80)	69.5 [66.0, 72.0]		
RMSC**	(N=8)	72.5 (2.38)	72.5 [70.0, 75.0]	68.3 (0.500)	68.0 [68.0, 69.0]
RNDC	(N=8)	71.5 (2.38)	71.5 [69.0, 74.0]	80.5 (7.72)	79.0 [73.0, 91.0]
WF*	(N=8)	70.4 (3.25)	70.0 [67.0, 77.0]		
Overall	(N=64)	70.8 (3.49)	71.0 [59.0, 78.0]	79.2 (8.15)	79.5 [68.0, 95.0]

* NIC, RESH, and WF only contains heat-sensitive housing.

**RMSC has both heat-sensitive and non-heat-sensitive housing. However, all units are air-conditioned.

Data Source: BOC analysis of administrative project data

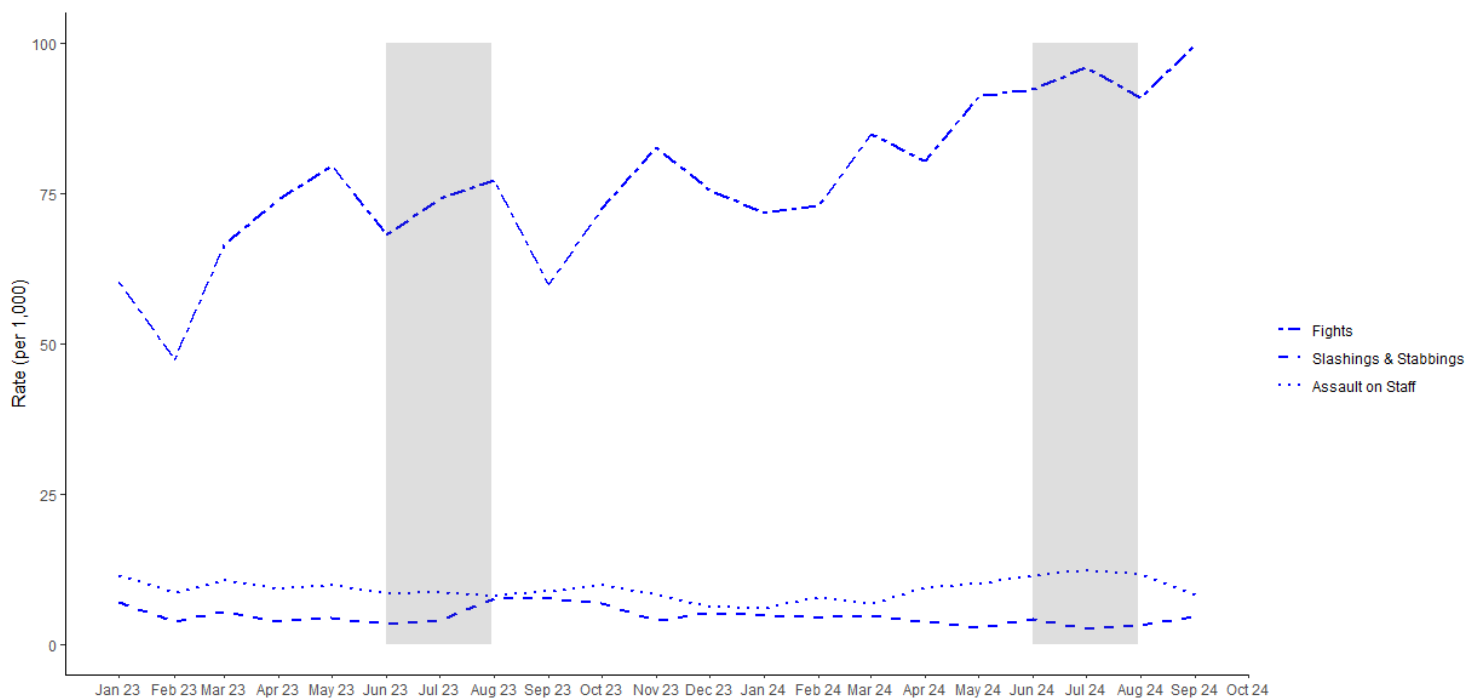
BOC also observed high temperatures in spaces that may be utilized by both heat-sensitive and non-heat-sensitive PIC. Temperatures during BOC's eight tours to religious spaces ranged from 72°F to 94°F with a median of 80°F and a mean of 81.6°F. Similarly, during BOC's ten tours of recreation areas, which are outdoors, temperatures ranged between 70°F and 94°F with a median of 84°F and a mean of 83.1°F. During its heat monitoring efforts, BOC also toured intake eight times in EMTC and eight times in RMSC. Intake at EMTC is air-

conditioned while it is not at RMSC⁷. This means that PIC who may have heat sensitive conditions experience higher temperatures on average at RMSC than EMTC (82.5°F versus 69.0°F) while undergoing the intake process.

Violence

BOC also reviewed publicly available data on fights, slashings/stabbings, and assaults on staff between January 2023 through September 2024 and found no evidence of seasonal trends in violence (Figure 1). The rates (per 1,000 ADP) of fights have generally continued to increase since January 2023 while the rates of slashings/stabbings and assaults on staff have remained relatively flat.

Figure 1: Rates (per 1,000 ADP) of Fights, Slashings/Stabbings, and Assaults on Staff



Data Source: BOC analysis of NYC OpenData

Qualitative

Despite DOC’s full compliance with providing ice and fans in non-air-conditioned areas visited by BOC when temperatures exceeded 85°F (or 80°F after August 3), both PIC and COs reported discomfort, particularly in facilities where air circulation was poor. The interviews revealed that fans often circulated hot air, doing little to reduce the actual heat in non-air-conditioned areas. Additionally, the timing of ice distribution, although compliant, was sometimes insufficient to meet the needs of individuals exposed to high temperatures throughout the day.

Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), research staff reviewed the answers and field notes taken during the interview, identifying 20 potential key words, phrases, and themes (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

⁷ Barring any complications, the intake receiving room and surrounding areas will be fully air conditioned by Summer 2025.

From this initial list, research staff clustered them into superordinate (n=5) and emergent (n=11) themes⁸. The five superordinate themes are: Not Prepared for the Summer, The Need for Central Air Conditioning, Nobody Provides for Us, Feeling Helpless, and DOC Higher Ups are Unaware of the Complexities of Living and Working on Rikers. Table 7 below has a comprehensive breakdown of the superordinate and emergent themes (see Appendix E for a comprehensive breakdown of superordinate and emergent themes for PIC and COs).

Table 7: Superordinate and Emergent Themes

Superordinate Themes	Emergent Themes
Not Prepared for the Summer	Overheated living and housing areas Lack of additional summer clothing Summer Uniforms FINALLY Fans are useless and old or broken
Need for Air Conditioning / Central Air Conditioning	Employ more fans Open windows and open meal slots in cells to get air circulation
Don't Provide for Us	Inconsistent providing ice and water Lack of additional summer clothing
Feeling Helpless	DOC bosses don't care Nothing will get fixed
DOC Higher Ups are Unaware of the Complexities of Living and Working on Rikers	Fridges, Food, and Water Same Thing Different Year

Data Source: BOC analysis of administrative project data

Not Prepared for the Summer

This year, temperatures reached the low to high 90s earlier than last year. Throughout BOC's heat monitoring, both monitoring and research staff observed extremely high temperatures both outside and inside facilities and housing areas. Through talking to both PIC and COs, the research staff learned that neither group believed that DOC was adequately prepared for the summer. When discussing this topic, both groups quickly expressed high levels of frustration (including but not limited to: cursing, increased voices, and finger pointing). Indeed, one male PIC stated "They didn't do shit for me or the facility." The idea that DOC did not do anything for specific individuals in custody or those who work on Rikers Island was prevalent in almost every interview and discussion. Another PIC participant complained that they did not get summer clothing and it was already over 80 degrees outside. In addition, two uniform COs mentioned that they were just finally (this year) allowed to wear summer uniforms (polo shirts). "They finally allowed us to wear polos and short sleeves." Both PIC and

⁸ The 20 key words and phrases gathered from the 16 interviews (uniformed COs and PICs) were first clustered into emergent (minor) themes. These emergent themes (or minor clusters) are then grouped together again in similar groups to reveal the superordinate (major) themes.

COs also pointed out the ongoing issue of the older and broken fans that are located throughout the facilities. One CO during the interview pointed to their fan and stated, “What’s the point of fans if they don’t work, or worse, only blow hot air?”

The Need for Air Conditioning

A universal complaint for both participating and non-participating PIC and COs is the lack of air conditioning in all facilities and housing areas. More specifically, central air conditioning. When asked what DOC can do to improve their preparation for the summer, every single participant (n=16) stated putting central air conditioning everywhere. If someone was not housed or working in a heat sensitive housing area, the indoor temperatures within the housing units were often excruciatingly hot. On 11 occasions the indoor temperatures were over 80°F and on two occasions the indoor temperature was about 90°F. These do not include the instances where the ‘A’ station⁹ were over 80°F. Two quotes from long stay (≥ 1 year) PIC highlight the issue of extreme heat in the housing areas: “We need AC man, it’s so hot, I don’t want to do anything” and “They treat us like shit, and they wonder why we fight, argue, and become disruptive.” The COs also complained about the extreme temperatures inside. One quote by a male CO located in an extremely hot (≥90°F) ‘A’ Station summed it up:

“We need Central AC. It’s so hot in the bubble and on the floor. It’s like 80 degrees (temperature check was 94 degrees) and I have to be here all shift and then some if my replacement doesn’t come or they can’t find someone to cover. That’s bullshit.”

Don’t Provide for Us

There was a strong belief amongst the PIC that DOC (and in some cases CHS) does not provide for them. This can mean different things for different individuals who were interviewed or commented. Some of these beliefs can be clustered with other emergent themes for other superordinate themes. Through the interviews, Board staff learned that DOC inconsistently provided ice and water to PIC when it was hot outside. There was a common belief (n=13) that fresh ice and water would be provided three times a day regardless of outdoor temperature. In four instances, PIC and COs corroborated that ice was only delivered in the morning the previous day and that ice had to last all day despite the heat. In one facility, the ice machine was broken and correctional staff were required to get ice for each housing area from another facility. One male PIC started complaining halfway through the interview about the heat conditions and “the so-called leadership”. Specifically, he stated “we should be getting ice and cold water daily regardless of the temperature, so we don’t get sick or hot.”

During an interview in early July, another male PIC in a heat sensitive housing area complained about the heat conditions in facilities, including the lack of fans and summer clothing. He verbally expressed his anger and frustration stating:

“Do they really expect us to go three or four months with a single pair of shorts and maybe two (fingers) t-shirts? Come on bro, that’s some bullshit.”

He continued to complain that he would often have to go out to recreation and get sweaty only to come back to the housing area to shower and then have to put back on the same pair of shorts he wore outside since they were his only pair.

⁹ The “A” station is the housing area’s secured control room and cannot be accessed by PIC. “A” post officers remain inside the “A” station, colloquially known as the “bubble.”

Feeling Helpless

Most of the PIC who were interviewed described different levels of helplessness. A consistent complaint made by PIC and even some COs is the belief that nothing will get fixed. One mid-aged adult male PIC stated:

“I’ve been here for two or three summers now (fuck man), and it’s the same every year. It’s too hot, then in the winter it’s too cold. It’s torture, I’ve complained to my lawyer and to 311.”

One older PIC who has in his words been a “repeat visitor to Rikers Island for over 15 years”, stated he also felt bad for the COs since they have it bad too. He stated emphatically (screaming),

“Man, these motherfuckers don’t care about us. Look at that CO (finger pointing), he’s been sleeping for like an hour and he’s been here since dinner last night, that’s like 16 hours. If they do that to their own, what do you think they do to or for us?”

These feelings of helplessness often led to anger and despair. Indeed, two individuals interviewed stated they wish they would be released or sent upstate (to prison) soon so they can leave Rikers. Another three mentioned trying to talk to their lawyers about suing DOC and the City for allowing these conditions to occur.

This sense of helplessness was not just expressed by the PIC who were interviewed. Indeed, four of the COs who were interviewed also expressed varying degrees of helplessness. One experienced CO (with over 12 years of work experience with DOC) stated,

“I don’t expect anything anymore. I just know nothing will change and that they don’t care about us. Look, this my (looking at his watch), 15th straight hour working with no relief and no water.”

This specific interview occurred when the temperature was in the low 80s, and when asked how they think the rest of the summer will go, they responded with laughter and headshaking as if they were asked a nonsensical question.

DOC Higher Ups are Unaware of the Complexities of Living and Working on Rikers¹⁰

All uniformed COs interviewed (n=8) expressed beliefs that emerged into the DOC Higher Ups are Unaware of the Complexities of Living and Working on Rikers theme. This theme includes different emergent themes including Fridges, Food, and Water and Same Thing Different Year. One female CO who was working in the ‘A’ station but often works the ‘B’ post or housing area floor, complained about the fridges. She complained that many of them do not work or only keep staff’s water and food cool and not cold.

A male CO who was stationed as a recreation officer (outside) complained about how staff need to provide their own water. “They (DOC) need to supply us with water and food. I have to purchase and bring my own water, that’s wild man.” A female CO who was present agreed, stating “we be outside all shift, and they can’t even give us water.”

¹⁰ A uniformed CO who completed the interview, along with two other COs who were present but did not formally participate, corroborated the participant’s responses that DOC leadership are “clueless”, “useless,” and “lack awareness.” The superordinate theme was established by clustering similar keywords, phrases, and direct quotes.

The Complaints by COs were mainly against DOC staff who do not work on Rikers Island but instead at Bullova¹¹. Indeed, two older male COs with over 15 years of experience shared their complaints with the research staff. One of these COs who was stable as a recreation officer stated:

“It’s been the same problem year after year, I’ve been here 18 years and it’s the same issues (lack of AC, no water, no ice, etc.). I have two years left and I can’t wait to fucking leave. You can tell them that.”

The other experienced CO was working an ‘A’ station in a non-heat sensitive housing area where the inside temperature was hotter than the outside temperature. He stated this often occurs during the summer months. He stated:

“The higher ups and Bullova (air quotes) “staff” are both clueless and useless (you can tell them I said that). They come visit one area and it’s hot they say we’ll get it fixed and then they NEVER follow up let alone visit again.”

Conclusion

BOC’s assessment of DOC’s heat mitigation plan reveals that, while DOC was in full compliance with providing ice and fans in non-air-conditioned areas visited by BOC when outdoor temperatures exceeded the required thresholds, these measures were insufficient to ensure comfort in many housing areas. Based on quantitative and qualitative data collected by BOC, the reliance on fans and periodic ice distribution did not adequately mitigate the effects of extreme heat in poorly ventilated areas. As New York City moves towards the closure of Rikers Island and the implementation of the Borough-Based Jails (BBJ) plan, it is also critical that DOC fully incorporate the recommendations concerning improving documentation of preparedness and reporting into the Borough-Based Jails (BBJ) operations plan. This would create safer and more resilient facilities that prioritize the health and well-being of PIC and staff.

In alignment with New York City’s commitment to close Rikers Island by 2027, it is also critical that DOC fully incorporate the recommendations concerning improving documentation of preparedness and reporting into the Borough-Based Jails (BBJ) operations plan. According to DOC and the New York City Department of Design and Construction infrastructure plans, BBJs will be air-conditioned in their entirety.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on findings from BOC’s summer 2024 heat mitigation monitoring, which highlight the need for enhanced cooling strategies and better data-driven responses to heat-related risks. These recommendations aim to improve DOC’s ability to safeguard the health and well-being of PICs and COs during extreme heat conditions.

1. DOC should **improve heat mitigation efforts by enhancing cooling options in non-air-conditioned areas**. To do this, DOC should:
 - a. **Expand cooling solutions**. DOC should provide portable air conditioning units, where secure to do so, and misting systems in non-air-conditioned areas. Specifically, sufficient air conditioning units should be available for all heat sensitive persons by May 15, 2025. Furthermore, all housing areas should be served by effective air conditioning by May 15, 2026.

¹¹ The Bullova Building or ‘Bullova’ is the physical headquarters of Department of Correction in Queens, New York.

- b. **Ensure consistent ventilation.** DOC should identify facilities with inadequate ventilation and, where possible, take measures to improve airflow, such as opening meal slots and windows.
- 2. DOC should **enhance its temperature monitoring and tracking capacity.** In particular, DOC should:
 - a. **Expand temperature monitoring.** DOC should expand temperature monitoring to include common (intake, recreation, religious, visitation, programming, etc.) in addition to housing areas (cells, dorms, dayrooms, etc.). Temperatures should be taken in housing and common areas daily.
 - b. **Implement real-time temperature tracking.** DOC should transition out of the practice of keeping paper logbooks and develop an electronic log system. The electronic system should capture information triggered at the individual cell level. Until such a system is implemented, Tour Commanders should articulate an action plan to regularly audit logbooks against Genetec video footage and Watch Tour data at unpredictable times to ensure that rounds are taking place as required and to detect incorrect entries.
 - c. **Track and analyze incidents related to heat exposure.**
 - i. DOC should begin tracking health incidents related to heat exposure during the summer months, including instances of referrals to Correctional Health Services (CHS) when PIC verbalize that they require medical attention because of the high temperature where they are located. This data should be reviewed daily to identify areas where additional cooling measures may be needed.
 - ii. DOC should also track incidents related to heat exposure in connection to malfunctioning heaters or radiators during the winter months, as high temperature generated by faulty equipment can also present health risks to PIC. DOC must immediately identify and repair such malfunctioning equipment and remove PIC from the affected area.
- 3. DOC should **improve the distribution of water and ice** during the summer months. To do this, DOC should install and track the usage of hydration stations that provide PIC and COs on-demand water and ice.
- 4. DOC should implement measures to **improve its documentation of overall preparedness** for the summer months. In particular, DOC should:
 - a. **Conduct and electronically document pre-summer equipment and housing areas checks.** DOC should complete operational checks of all cooling equipment (fans, air conditioners, misting units, and hydration stations) by May 15 of each year. This includes replacing or repairing broken equipment and documenting the operational status in an electronic database. DOC should maintain an electronic inventory of equipment critical to its cooling measures during the summer months and track allocation across all facilities. Additionally, DOC should thoroughly check and electronically document ventilation in all housing areas.
 - b. **Electronically document distribution of appropriate summer clothing.** DOC should ensure that all PIC and COs are provided with summer-appropriate clothing by June 1, with multiple sets available to allow regular changes. DOC should electronically track its distribution of summer-appropriate clothing.
- 5. DOC should aim to **improve the consistency and efficiency of its heat mitigation measures** during Summer 2025. DOC should track and report to BOC the following on a monthly basis during the heat mitigation period (May through September each year):

- a. By facility, the total number and percent of PIC and COs in air-conditioned housing areas. Reporting on PIC should be further disaggregated by the number and percent of individuals who are heat sensitive versus not heat sensitive.
- b. By facility, the total number and percent of PIC and COs in non-air-conditioned housing areas. Reporting on PIC should be further disaggregated by the number and percent of individuals who are heat sensitive versus not heat sensitive. DOC should also report the number and percentage of security overrides versus refusals for heat sensitive PIC who are housed in non-air-conditioned housing areas.
- c. By facility, summary temperature statistics (minimum, median, mean, standard deviation, and maximum) for air-conditioned versus non-air-conditioned common and housing areas.
- d. By facility, overall satisfaction with heat mitigation efforts. DOC should introduce a survey system to evaluate PIC and CO satisfaction with summer preparedness and cooling measures.

By adopting these recommendations, BOC believes that DOC will significantly enhance its capacity to manage summer heat, ensuring that both PIC and correctional staff are protected from extreme temperatures.

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Appendices

Appendix A: DOC teletypes

FROM: COMMISSIONER'S ORDER MSG#: 2024-003544
TO : SENT: 05/23/24 1031 HRS
SUBJ:

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TELETYPE ORDER NO. HQ -00955-0

DATE MAY 23, 2024

TO COMMANDING OFFICERS, FACILITIES AND DIVISIONS

FROM LYNELLE MAGINLEY-LIDDIE, COMMISSIONER

SUBJECT TEMPERATURE MONITORING PROCEDURES FOR THE SPRING/SUMMER

1. **EFFECTIVE MAY 23, 2024** BETWEEN 1300-1600 HOURS, THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES FOR TAKING TEMPERATURES IN OCCUPIED AREAS SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED:

A. TEMPERATURES SHALL BE TAKEN DAILY IN ALL CLINICS, MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH HOUSING AREAS INCLUDING THE ROSE M. SINGER CENTER NURSERY WHEN OCCUPIED;

B. **TEMPERATURES SHALL BE TAKEN DAILY ON A ROTATIONAL BASIS IN 10% OF NON-AIR-CONDITIONED HOUSING AREAS; AND**

C. **TEMPERATURES SHALL BE TAKEN DAILY ON A ROTATIONAL BASIS IN 20% OF AIR-CONDITIONED HOUSING AREAS (INCLUSIVE OF MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH HOUSING AREA) .**

2. IN DORMITORY HOUSING AREAS, THREE (3) TEMPERATURES SHALL BE TAKEN IN THE SLEEPING AREA (FRONT, MIDDLE, AND REAR) AND ONE (1) TEMPERATURE SHALL BE TAKEN IN THE DAYROOM. IN CELL HOUSING AREAS, THE TEMPERATURE SHALL BE TAKEN **INSIDE** THREE (3) CELLS ON EACH SIDE OF A TIER. THEREFORE, SIX (6) CELL TEMPERATURES SHALL BE TAKEN IN A ONE (1) STORY HOUSING AREA AND TWELVE (12) TEMPERATURES SHALL BE TAKEN IN A TWO (2) STORY HOUSING AREA. THE CELL NUMBER AND THE ASSOCIATED TEMPERATURE SHALL BE RECORDED ON THE TEMPERATURE MONITORING REPORT. THE CELLS SHALL BE ROTATED DAILY. TEMPERATURES SHALL **NOT** BE TAKEN IN BATHROOM/SHOWER AREAS.

3. **THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH UNIT SHALL PROVIDE THE "TEMPERATURE REPORT" TEMPLATE AND THE DAILY TEMPERATURE SCHEDULE TO EACH FACILITY. THE**

STAFF MEMBER TAKING THE DAILY TEMPERATURES MUST REPORT THE TEMPERATURES TO THE TOUR COMMANDER IMMEDIATELY. SIGNED COPIES OF COMPLETED TEMPERATURE REPORTS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH VIA E-MAIL OR FAX (718-546-3086) WITHIN THREE HOURS.

4. WITHIN ONE (1) HOUR OF NOTIFICATION BY ANY PERSON, THE TOUR COMMANDER SHALL NOTIFY THE FACILITY WARDEN/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER AND THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH VIA THE CENTRAL OPERATIONS DESK WHEN THE TEMPERATURE WITHIN AN AIR-CONDITIONED AREA REACHES OR EXCEEDS 80° F. THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SHALL PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEMPERATURE MONITORING. THE RESULTS OF ALL ORDERED TEMPERATURE MONITORING ARE TO BE E-MAILED TO THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND THE DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT OF THE TEMPERATURES.

5. WARDENS/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OR THEIR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT TWO (2) OPERABLE FANS ARE PROVIDED IN ALL NON-AIR-CONDITIONED HOUSING AREAS BY THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON **MAY 31, 2024**. ADDITIONALLY, THE WARDEN/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT THE TWO (2) FANS IN THE HOUSING AREAS ARE CHECKED DAILY TO ENSURE THAT THE FANS ARE OPERABLE.

6. WARDENS/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OR THEIR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT TWO (2) **OPERABLE FANS ARE TEMPORARILY PROVIDED TO HOUSING AREAS WITH INOPERABLE AIR-CONDITIONING SYSTEMS UNTIL THE SYSTEMS** ARE RESTORED. ADDITIONALLY, THE WARDEN/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT THE TWO (2) FANS IN THE HOUSING AREAS ARE CHECKED DAILY TO ENSURE THAT THE FANS ARE OPERABLE.

7. WARDENS/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OR THEIR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT THE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS (EXCEPT FOR RESTRICTED HOUSING AREAS AND ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING) SHALL HAVE UNLIMITED ACCESS TO THE SHOWERS BETWEEN **0500-2100** HOURS DURING LOCKOUT PERIODS. INDIVIDUALS IN ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AND RESTRICTED HOUSING UNITS SHALL HAVE UNLIMITED ACCESS TO THE SHOWERS DURING THEIR LOCK-OUT TIMES.

8. ICE SHALL BE DELIVERED TO NON-AIR-CONDITIONED HOUSING AREAS BETWEEN 1200 AND 1600 HOURS ON ALL DAYS WHEN THE OUTSIDE TEMPERATURE EXCEEDS 85° F. IN ADDITION TO THE COLD BEVERAGES SERVED WITH THE MIDDAY AND EVENING MEALS, AN ADDITIONAL CUP OF ICE SHALL BE PROVIDED TO ALL INDIVIDUALS HOUSED IN RESTRICTED HOUSING AND IN ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AREAS EVERY TWO (2) HOURS BETWEEN 1200 HOURS AND 2000 HOURS. LOGBOOK ENTRIES SHALL BE MADE DOCUMENTING THE PROVISION OF ICE EACH TIME ICE CAMBROS ARE DELIVERED TO THE HOUSING AREAS. LOGBOOK ENTRIES SHALL ALSO BE MADE IN RESTRICTED AND ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AREAS DOCUMENTING THAT AN ADDITIONAL CUP OF ICE IS PROVIDED TO EACH INDIVIDUAL HOUSED IN THESE AREAS. THE LOGBOOK ENTRY DESCRIBING THE DELIVERY OF ICE SHALL BE

CLEARLY DELINEATED FROM THE DELIVERY OF A COLD BEVERAGE WITH THE DAILY MEALS.

9. **HOUSING AREAS WITH INOPERABLE AIR-CONDITIONING SYSTEMS** SHALL BE DELIVERED ICE BETWEEN 1200 AND 1600 HOURS ON ALL DAYS WHEN THE OUTSIDE TEMPERATURE EXCEEDS 85° F. IN ADDITION TO THE COLD BEVERAGES SERVED WITH THE MIDDAY AND EVENING MEALS, AN ADDITIONAL CUP OF ICE SHALL BE PROVIDED TO ALL INDIVIDUALS HOUSED IN RESTRICTED HOUSING AND IN ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AREAS EVERY TWO (2) HOURS BETWEEN 1200 HOURS AND 2000 HOURS. LOGBOOK ENTRIES SHALL BE MADE DOCUMENTING THE PROVISION OF ICE EACH TIME ICE CAMBROS ARE DELIVERED TO THE HOUSING AREAS. LOGBOOK ENTRIES SHALL ALSO BE MADE IN RESTRICTED AND ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AREAS DOCUMENTING THAT AN ADDITIONAL CUP OF ICE IS PROVIDED TO EACH INDIVIDUAL HOUSED IN THESE AREAS. THE LOGBOOK ENTRY DESCRIBING THE DELIVERY OF ICE SHALL BE CLEARLY DELINEATED FROM THE DELIVERY OF A COLD BEVERAGE WITH THE DAILY MEALS.

10. THE FOLLOWING MEASURES SHALL BE TAKEN BY ALL CORRECTIONAL STAFF TO INCREASE THE SAFETY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS DURING WARM WEATHER:

- A. ENCOURAGE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS TO DRINK FLUIDS LIBERALLY;
- B. ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL REST PERIODS;
- C. ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS TO TAKE COOL SHOWERS PERIODICALLY AND OTHER APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO CONTROL BODY TEMPERATURE;
- D. ADVISE DEPARTMENT STAFF TO REFER TO MEDICAL SERVICES ANY INDIVIDUALS OBSERVED TO BE EXPERIENCING EXTREME WEAKNESS, HEADACHES, LETHARGY, PROFUSE SWEATING, VOMITING AND/OR CONFUSION, WHICH MAY BE A RESULT OF HEAT EXHAUSTION; AND
- E. DISPLAY HEAT ALERT POSTERS, WHICH ADVISE DEPARTMENT STAFF OF PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN FOR THE PREVENTION OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES, THROUGHOUT EACH HOUSING FACILITY WHERE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS ARE HOUSED, TO PROVIDE HEAT-RELATED INFORMATION TO THE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.

11. WHEN THE AMBIENT TEMPERATURE EXCEEDS 85°F IN ANY HOUSING AREA, DOC SHALL TAKE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL MEASURES;

- A. INCREASED MONITORING OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS BY STAFF TO DETERMINE IF ANY PERSON IS EXPERIENCING EXTREME WEAKNESS, HEADACHES, LETHARGY, PROFUSE SWEATING, VOMITING AND/OR CONFUSION, WHICH MAY BE A RESULT OF HEAT EXHAUSTION; AND
- B. IN THE EVENT A DETERMINATION IS MADE THAT AN INDIVIDUAL MAY BE

TEMPERATURE SHALL BE TAKEN IN THE DAYROOM. IN CELL HOUSING AREAS, THE TEMPERATURE SHALL BE TAKEN INSIDE THREE (3) CELLS ON EACH SIDE OF A TIER. THEREFORE, SIX (6) CELL TEMPERATURES SHALL BE TAKEN IN A ONE (1) STORY HOUSING AREA AND TWELVE (12) TEMPERATURES SHALL BE TAKEN IN A TWO (2) STORY HOUSING AREA. THE CELL NUMBER AND THE ASSOCIATED TEMPERATURE SHALL BE RECORDED ON THE TEMPERATURE MONITORING REPORT. THE CELLS SHALL BE ROTATED DAILY. TEMPERATURES SHALL NOT BE TAKEN IN BATHROOM/SHOWER AREAS.

3. THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH UNIT SHALL PROVIDE THE "TEMPERATURE REPORT" TEMPLATE AND THE DAILY TEMPERATURE SCHEDULE TO EACH FACILITY. THE STAFF MEMBER TAKING THE DAILY TEMPERATURES MUST REPORT THE TEMPERATURES TO THE TOUR COMMANDER IMMEDIATELY. SIGNED COPIES OF COMPLETED TEMPERATURE REPORTS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH VIA E-MAIL OR FAX (718-546-3086) WITHIN THREE HOURS.

4. WITHIN ONE (1) HOUR OF NOTIFICATION BY ANY PERSON, THE TOUR COMMANDER SHALL NOTIFY THE FACILITY WARDEN/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER AND THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH VIA THE CENTRAL OPERATIONS DESK WHEN THE TEMPERATURE WITHIN AN AIR-CONDITIONED AREA REACHES OR EXCEEDS 80° F. THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SHALL PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEMPERATURE MONITORING. THE RESULTS OF ALL ORDERED TEMPERATURE MONITORING ARE TO BE E-MAILED TO THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND THE DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT OF THE TEMPERATURES.

5. WARDENS/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OR THEIR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT TWO (2) OPERABLE FANS ARE PROVIDED IN ALL NON-AIR-CONDITIONED HOUSING AREAS BY THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON MAY 31, 2024. ADDITIONALLY, THE WARDEN/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT THE TWO (2) FANS IN THE HOUSING AREAS ARE CHECKED DAILY TO ENSURE THAT THE FANS ARE OPERABLE.

6. WARDENS/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OR THEIR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT TWO (2) OPERABLE FANS ARE TEMPORARILY PROVIDED TO HOUSING AREAS WITH INOPERABLE AIR-CONDITIONING SYSTEMS UNTIL THE SYSTEMS ARE RESTORED. ADDITIONALLY, THE WARDEN/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT THE TWO (2) FANS IN THE HOUSING AREAS ARE CHECKED DAILY TO ENSURE THAT THE FANS ARE OPERABLE.

7. WARDENS/ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OR THEIR DESIGNEE SHALL ENSURE THAT THE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS (EXCEPT FOR RESTRICTED HOUSING AREAS AND ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING) SHALL HAVE UNLIMITED ACCESS TO THE SHOWERS BETWEEN 0500-2100 HOURS DURING LOCKOUT PERIODS. INDIVIDUALS IN ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AND RESTRICTED HOUSING UNITS SHALL HAVE UNLIMITED ACCESS TO THE SHOWERS DURING THEIR LOCK-OUT TIMES.

8. ICE SHALL BE DELIVERED TO NON-AIR-CONDITIONED HOUSING AREAS BETWEEN 1200 AND 1600 HOURS ON ALL DAYS WHEN THE OUTSIDE TEMPERATURE

EXCEEDS 80° F. IN ADDITION TO THE COLD BEVERAGES SERVED WITH THE MIDDAY AND EVENING MEALS, AN ADDITIONAL CUP OF ICE SHALL BE PROVIDED TO ALL INDIVIDUALS HOUSED IN RESTRICTED HOUSING AND IN ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AREAS EVERY TWO (2) HOURS BETWEEN 1200 HOURS AND 2000 HOURS. LOGBOOK ENTRIES SHALL BE MADE DOCUMENTING THE PROVISION OF ICE EACH TIME ICE CAMBROS ARE DELIVERED TO THE HOUSING AREAS. LOGBOOK ENTRIES SHALL ALSO BE MADE IN RESTRICTED AND ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AREAS DOCUMENTING THAT AN ADDITIONAL CUP OF ICE IS PROVIDED TO EACH INDIVIDUAL HOUSED IN THESE AREAS. THE LOGBOOK ENTRY DESCRIBING THE DELIVERY OF ICE SHALL BE CLEARLY DELINEATED FROM THE DELIVERY OF A COLD BEVERAGE WITH THE DAILY MEALS.

9. HOUSING AREAS WITH INOPERABLE AIR-CONDITIONING SYSTEMS SHALL BE DELIVERED ICE BETWEEN 1200 AND 1600 HOURS ON ALL DAYS WHEN THE **OUTSIDE TEMPERATURE EXCEEDS 80° F.** IN ADDITION TO THE COLD BEVERAGES SERVED WITH THE MIDDAY AND EVENING MEALS, AN ADDITIONAL CUP OF ICE SHALL BE PROVIDED TO ALL INDIVIDUALS HOUSED IN RESTRICTED HOUSING AND IN ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AREAS EVERY TWO (2) HOURS BETWEEN 1200 HOURS AND 2000 HOURS. LOGBOOK ENTRIES SHALL BE MADE DOCUMENTING THE PROVISION OF ICE EACH TIME ICE CAMBROS ARE DELIVERED TO THE HOUSING AREAS. LOGBOOK ENTRIES SHALL ALSO BE MADE IN RESTRICTED AND ENHANCED SUPERVISION HOUSING AREAS DOCUMENTING THAT AN ADDITIONAL CUP OF ICE IS PROVIDED TO EACH INDIVIDUAL HOUSED IN THESE AREAS. THE LOGBOOK ENTRY DESCRIBING THE DELIVERY OF ICE SHALL BE CLEARLY DELINEATED FROM THE DELIVERY OF A COLD BEVERAGE WITH THE DAILY MEALS.

10. THE FOLLOWING MEASURES SHALL BE TAKEN BY ALL CORRECTIONAL STAFF TO INCREASE THE SAFETY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS DURING WARM WEATHER:

- A. ENCOURAGE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS TO DRINK FLUIDS LIBERALLY;
- B. ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL REST PERIODS;
- C. ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS TO TAKE COOL SHOWERS PERIODICALLY AND OTHER APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO CONTROL BODY TEMPERATURE;
- D. ADVISE DEPARTMENT STAFF TO REFER TO MEDICAL SERVICES ANY INDIVIDUALS OBSERVED TO BE EXPERIENCING EXTREME WEAKNESS, HEADACHES, LETHARGY, PROFUSE SWEATING, VOMITING AND/OR CONFUSION, WHICH MAY BE A RESULT OF HEAT EXHAUSTION; AND
- E. DISPLAY HEAT ALERT POSTERS, WHICH ADVISE DEPARTMENT STAFF OF PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN FOR THE PREVENTION OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES, THROUGHOUT EACH HOUSING FACILITY WHERE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS ARE HOUSED, TO PROVIDE HEAT-RELATED INFORMATION TO THE INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.

11. **WHEN THE AMBIENT TEMPERATURE EXCEEDS 80°F IN ANY HOUSING AREA,**
DOC SHALL TAKE THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL MEASURES;

- A. INCREASED MONITORING OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS BY STAFF TO DETERMINE IF ANY PERSON IS EXPERIENCING EXTREME WEAKNESS, HEADACHES, LETHARGY, PROFUSE SWEATING, VOMITING AND/OR CONFUSION, WHICH MAY BE A RESULT OF HEAT EXHAUSTION; AND
- B. IN THE EVENT A DETERMINATION IS MADE THAT AN INDIVIDUAL MAY BE SUFFERING FROM HEAT EXHAUSTION, MEDICAL ATTENTION SHALL BE PROMPTLY PROVIDED.

12. COMMANDING OFFICERS OF FACILITIES AND DIVISIONS ARE DIRECTED TO ENSURE THAT ALL DEPUTY WARDENS AND TOUR COMMANDERS ARE FURNISHED WITH A COPY OF THIS TELETYPE AND ENSURE THAT THIS TELETYPE IS READ IN ITS ENTIRETY AT TWENTY-ONE (21) CONSECUTIVE ROLL CALLS AND THAT A COMMAND-LEVEL ORDER IS PREPARED AND DISTRIBUTED TO APPROPRIATE EMPLOYEES AND OFFICES WITHIN EACH COMMAND.

AUTHORITY:
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
LML/KS

Appendix B: Quantitative Data Collection Instrument

BOC Staff Information

Name:

(please write the names of staff and/or board members completing this tour)

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Date & Time: ____ / ____ / 2024 ____:____AM / PM

(Please write the date and time of tour in HH:MM, 12hr format, and circle AM or PM)

High Heat Day: YES NO

(please circle Yes or No to indicate whether the tour was conducted on a high heat day: > 85°F before 8/3/2024 OR >80°F after 8/3/2024)

Heat Advisory Issued: YES NO

(please circle Yes or No to indicate whether DOC issued a heat advisory on the day of the tour)

DOC Facility Information

Facility & Housing Area:

(please indicate the housing area next to the facility of tour)

EMTC _____ GRVC _____ NIC _____ OBCC _____
 RESH _____ RMSC _____ RNDC _____ WF _____

Heat Sensitive Housing: YES NO

(please circle Yes or No to indicate whether housing area toured is heat sensitive housing)

Housing Type:

(please circle the type of housing area toured)

Cell Dorm Mod

Special Housing Type:

(please circle the type of special housing area toured; if other, please specify)

GP MO Infirmary YA
 ESH DEESC Protective Custody Other: _____

Heat Monitoring Information

Number of working fans:

(please circle the observed number of working fans)

AC 0 1 2 3+

Ice availability:

(please circle Yes or No to indicate ice availability)

YES NO

Summer appropriate clothing:

(please circle Yes or No to indicate observation whether PIC are wearing DOC-issued summer clothing)

YES NO

Temperatures (°F)									
(please record temperatures for the below areas for EACH visit)							(and for the below areas every ODD and EVEN numbered visit)		
Outside	A station	Dayroom	Dorm	Upper Tier	Mid Tier	Lower Tier	Clinic	Intake	Other*
°F	°F	°F	°F	°F	°F	°F	°F	°F	°F

*(please circle which other area of interest was visited): LAW LIBRARY RELIGIOUS RECREATION VISITATION

Appendix C: Qualitative Data Collection Instrument

BOC Staff Information

Name:

(please write the names of staff and/or board members completing this tour)

1. Alexander Hoffman 2. _____ 3. _____

Date & Time: ____ / ____ / 2024 ____:____AM / PM

(Please write the date and time of tour in HH:MM, 12hr format, and circle AM or PM)

High Heat Day: YES NO

(please circle Yes or No to indicate whether the tour was conducted on a high heat day, ≥85°F)

Heat Advisory Issued: YES NO

(please circle Yes or No to indicate whether there was a heat advisory on the day of the tour)

DOC Facility Information

Facility & Housing Area:

(please indicate the housing area next to the facility of tour)

EMTC _____ GRVC _____ NIC _____ OBCC _____
RESH _____ RMSC _____ RNDC _____ WF _____

Heat Sensitive Housing: YES NO

(please circle Yes or No to indicate whether housing area toured is heat sensitive housing)

Housing Type:

(please circle the type of housing area toured)

Cell Dorm Mod

Special Housing Type:

(please circle the type of special housing area toured; if other, please specify)

GP MO Infirmary YA
ESH DEESC Protective Custody Other: _____

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. What did the Department do to prepare you personally for the summer months?

2. What did the Department do to prepare the facility (or housing area) for the summer months?

3. What did you do personally to prepare for the summer months?

4. Do you think your concerns and needs were addressed and met in an efficient and timely manner? *(Please explain)*

5. What could be done to better prepare you for the summer months?

6. What could be done to better prepare the facility (or housing area) for the summer months?

7. What (if anything) was done differently by the Department this year to prepare for the summer months than last year?

8. What (if anything) would you do differently to prepare for the summer months?

9. What (if any) concerns do you have about the summer months?

2024 Summer Heat Mitigation Project Informed Consent Form

Summary and Purpose of the Project:

Every year the New York City Board of Correction conducts a Heat Monitoring Project to check the Department of Correction's plan and ability to mitigate severe heat conditions on Rikers Island. Collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data, Board staff study the Department's heat mitigation plan and the effectiveness of their plan. Through the Board's data collection and annual report, the Board hopes to improve the heat mitigation plan throughout Rikers Island.

Potential Benefits of Participating:

Help the Board of Correction understand the current heat conditions on Rikers Island, to learn what the Department of Correction has done to mitigate heat-related issues for the 2024 summer, and help the Board make recommendations to the Department of Correction for future summers to improve their heat mitigation plan and related activities.

Potential Risks of Participating:

There are no risks for participating.

Confidentiality:

There will be no identifying information reported publicly. All participants will be given a code (e.g., HSM01, NHSF01, etc.) and the consent forms will be kept in a secure area of the Board of Correction's office.

Participant Rights:

Any participant has the right to stop participating at any time with no consequences or punishment for stopping. Participants are also able to request that an answer be "off the record." Participants also have the right and ability to ask Board staff as many questions as they wish during the interview.

Participant's Agreement:

I have read the information provided above. I have asked all the questions I have at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Signature of Research Team Member Obtaining Consent

Date

Printed Name of Research Team Member Obtaining Consent

Book and Case Number of the Research Participant (*if necessary*)

Signature of Monitoring Team Member Overhearing Consent

Date

Printed Name of Monitoring Team Member Overhearing Consent

Appendix E: Superordinate and Emergent Themes for PIC and COs

Persons in Custody:

Superordinate Themes	Emergent Themes
Not Prepared for the Summer (n=8)	Overheated living and housing areas (n=4) Lack of <i>additional</i> summer clothing (n=2)
Central Air Conditioning (n=8)	Employ more fans (n=3) Open windows and open meal slots in cells to get air circulation (n=2)
Don't Provide for Us (n=7)	Inconsistent providing ice and water (n=4) Lack of <i>additional</i> summer clothing (n=2)
Feeling Helpless (n=6)	Department of Correction bosses don't care (n=2) Nothing will get fixed (n=4)

Uniformed Correctional Officers:

Superordinate Themes	Emergent Themes
Not Prepared for the Summer (n=7)	Summer Uniforms FINALLY (n=2) Fans are useless and old or broken (n=1)
Air Conditioning (n=8)	
DOC Higher Ups are Unaware of the Complexities of Living and Working on Rikers (n=8)	Fridges, Food, and Water (n=5) Same Thing Different Year (n=4)