



HOW DO WE CLOSE RIKERS?

In April 2016, JustLeadershipUSA launched the #CLOSErikers campaign, centering the leadership of people harmed by Rikers to demand the closure of the notorious jail complex. In the span of a year, organizers took the demand to close Rikers from a lofty ideal to the stated policy of New York City. Today, this movement continues to gain strength and momentum for our demand that Rikers is closed forever. We have a real opportunity to make this happen. We cannot allow more lives to be harmed by Rikers. We will not allow money to be wasted on Rikers instead of used to repair the harm that the justice system has done in our communities. We cannot allow New York City to keep caging people in barbaric facilities that are steeped in a culture of violence. Rikers cannot be reformed. It is truly irredeemable. The problem with Rikers is Rikers and there is only one solution. We can redefine justice in New York City. Together we can #CLOSErikers and #buildCOMMUNITIES.

THE REALITY OF RIKERS



Solutions

Along with our 170+ partner organizations, we know the Rikers population can be quickly and safely reduced by:

- Increasing pre-arrest diversions
- Decriminalizing low level offenses to reduce arrests and prosecutions
- Eliminating profit-driven money bail practices
- Ensuring the Constitutional right to a speedy trial
- Expanding existing alternative to incarceration programs
- Diverting people with mental health needs or substance addictions into treatment
- Eliminating the racist policies and practices that create and fuel the disproportionate impact that the justice system has on Black and Brown, LGBTQI, and gender non-conforming people in the system

Resources saved by closing Rikers must be reinvested to buildCOMMUNITIES — expand access to housing, employment, education, and treatment. Those reinvestments must be guided by the people most harmed by the city’s criminal justice system.

#CLOSErikers | The Path Forward

Key demands for Mayor Bill de Blasio:

- #CLOSErikers now
- Commit to not building any new criminal justice facilities on Rikers Island
- #CLOSEthebarge – an inhumane, irredeemable, and unjustifiable annex to the Rikers Island jails
- Release a comprehensive closure plan that includes meaningful community input and concrete next steps
- End broken windows policing by ending arrests for fare evasion, low-level drug charges, sex work, and gravity knife possession, and end the NYPD's quota-system for arrests and summonses
- End and destroy the NYPD's gang database
- Publicly support state-level, gold-standard reform to fulfill the people's Constitutional right to a speedy trial, eliminate profit-driven money bail practices, and implement open-file discovery
- Expand funding for diversion and alternative to incarceration programs, in partnership with grassroots experts
- Reconvene the Mayor's Behavioral Health Task Force
- Include formerly incarcerated people on all justice Task Forces and Committees

Key demands for New York City Council

- Hold public hearings to advance the #CLOSErikers process
- Demand accountability and transparency and a transformation in culture of the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the Department of Corrections, and all relevant agencies

Key demands for Governor Andrew Cuomo

- Champion bold reform that will result in groundbreaking overhaul to bail, discovery, and speedy trial laws
- Exercise statutory authority with the NYS Commission on Correction to order the closure of Rikers now

Key demands for New York State Legislature

- Pass gold-standard legislation advanced by the #FREEnewyork campaign to overhaul NYS's pretrial system
- Eradicate mandatory sentencing practices and enact comprehensive parole reform that decarcerates NYS

Be a part of history and join the #CLOSErikers Campaign.

For more information, email mail@justleadershipusa.org call 347.454.2195



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