

The logo for the New York City Bar, featuring the words "NEW YORK CITY BAR" in a bold, serif font, centered between two horizontal blue bars.

November 29, 2022

Hon. Eric Adams
Mayor of the City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: New York City's Local Conditional Release Commission

Dear Mayor Adams,

Congratulations on your first year in office as New York City's Mayor. We write to offer the assistance of members of the New York City Bar Association's Corrections and Community Reentry Committee and its Criminal Courts Committee in the formation of New York City's Local Conditional Release Commission.

The work of these two committees focuses directly on matters relevant to the Panel's mission.¹ Our members include attorneys and professionals from a myriad of pertinent backgrounds: prosecutors, defense counsel, former hearing officers, reentry officers, private practitioners, court attorneys, nonprofit legal services providers, reentry specialists, and formerly incarcerated persons. Combined our experience spans decades of New York trial and appellate work in state, local and federal courts.

We understand that the Local Conditional Release Commission was formed in June 2020.² Currently, however, we further understand the Commission does not have any of its five members, although you recently nominated three candidates. We write to offer our committees' services as a resource for you in advisory personnel, subject matter knowledge, and community-building.

¹ For more information on the work of the Corrections and Community Reentry Committee, *see* <https://www.nycbar.org/member-and-career-services/committees/corrections-and-community-reentry-committee>. For more information on the work of the Criminal Courts Committee, *see* <https://www.nycbar.org/member-and-career-services/committees/criminal-courts-committee>.

² Roberto Velez, the Commission's Executive Director, is a member of the Corrections and Community Reentry Committee. Mr. Velez was recused from involvement in the Committee's drafting, review, and approval of this letter. Lily Shapiro, also a member of the Corrections and Community Reentry Committee, is a candidate for the Commission. She also was recused.

About the Association

The mission of the New York City Bar Association, which was founded in 1870 and has over 23,000 members, is to equip and mobilize a diverse legal profession to practice with excellence, promote reform of the law, and uphold the rule of law and access to justice in support of a fair society and the public interest in our community, our nation, and throughout the world.

Although the committees do not believe that the Commission is a substitute for substantive criminal justice reform, it is nevertheless a powerful tool to reduce the population of Rikers Island. The Commission would also facilitate transitioning individuals back into their communities with adequate support, which should also help to lower recidivism rates. We strongly endorse the work of the Commission given its important functions and are eager to see the Commission with a full complement of members.

Our committees stand ready to assist you and your partners in fulfilling your recruitment and implementation process. If we can be helpful, please reach us through Elizabeth Kocienda, the City Bar's Director of Advocacy, at 212-382-4788 or ekocienda@nycbar.org.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Alexis Flyer, Co-Chair
Stephanie Holmes, Co-Chair
Corrections & Community Reentry Committee

Carola Beeney, Co-Chair
Anna G. Cominsky, Co-Chair
Criminal Courts Committee

Cc:

Hon. Shammeik Barat, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office of Appointments
Hon. Ana Bermudez, Commissioner, NYC Dept. of Probation
Brenda McGuire, Esq., Chief Counsel to the Mayor
Wayne McKenzie, Esq., General Counsel, NYC Dept. of Probation
Hon. Carlina Rivera, Chair, NYC Council Committee on Criminal Justice
Roberto Velez, Executive Director, NYC Conditional Release Commission