



**Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice**

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## **Concept Paper for Criminal Justice Transition Network (CJTN) RFP**

### **I. OVERVIEW**

The New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) seeks to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide transition services in every borough within NYC (Queens, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, and Staten Island). Last year approximately 14,000 people left New York City's jails and returned to their communities. Although many are successful in making the transition home, each year approximately 37% return to the city's custody within one year of release. Despite this, New York City has one of the lowest incarceration rates of all large cities in the United States, per capita, with an average daily jail population of approximately 7,000 as of October 2025. Research and practice show that there are still some improvements that can be implemented for individuals' post-release outcomes in the community, particularly within the first 90 days of release.

The MOCJ-funded "Community Justice Re-entry Network" (CJRN), comprised of 10 non-profit agencies across the 5 boroughs, has provided paid transitional employment, job training services, and a variety of supportive social services to thousands of justice-involved New Yorkers to help them stabilize in the community after involvement with the criminal justice system. From January 2021 to June 2025, the CJRN completed more than 17,000 intakes, had more than 3,000 permanent employment placements, and more than 2,500 placements into short-term transitional employment. CJRN also held training sessions for more than 14,000 individuals across a wide range of categories including but not limited to: cognitive behavioral skills, construction, technology, leadership, and peer work.

In an effort to build on the success of the CJRN and refine service delivery, MOCJ seeks to create a coordinated system of transitional services called the "**Community Justice Transition Network**" (CJTN) to continue discharge planning services and connect individuals leaving city jail to mentoring, education, employment, therapeutic services, and an array of additional supportive services included but not limited to mental health services, substance use treatment, physical healthcare, transitional case management, vital documents, financial literacy, etc. in the

community to promote community stability and reduce the likelihood of further justice system involvement. MOCJ seeks to serve anyone who needs transition services as early as their initial contact with the system. Although transitioning back into community is a continuous experience, MOCJ will place emphasis on serving and engaging individuals who are recently released (within 2 years) from custody.

Within the CJTN, MOCJ looks to establish the “**Workforce and Education Reentry Collaborative**” (WERC). WERC would be a subset of providers that will focus on providing education and workforce development services to individuals returning from incarceration and in the community. These providers will be dedicated to ensuring that justice impacted individuals are connected to transitional & permanent employment, educational opportunities, and long-term support to promote self-efficacy and economic stability. Services will also include retention efforts to ensure long-term success. This model aims to provide a more targeted approach for employment and education, while maintaining the wrap around services such as but not limited to case management services, mental health supports, substance abuse services, assistance with benefit procurement and enrollment, and referrals to other community-based organizations based on the needs of justice impacted individuals.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

The Community Justice Reentry Network (CJRN) was launched in 2017, as Jails to Jobs, under Mayor de Blasio. Jails to Jobs began with a \$10 million investment into a citywide, universal reentry system.

The CJRN provides individuals returning to NYC from state prisons, NYC jails, or other justice involvement with access to reentry services and resources, supporting their adjustment back into the community and reducing their likelihood of recidivism. CJRN services include discharge planning prior to release from jail or prison, transportation from jail and prison to nonprofit service providers in NYC, and a range of supportive community-based services. These include paid transitional employment and connections to permanent employment, job training, financial literacy, career certifications, mental health and substance use treatment, individual and group counseling, benefits assistance, mentoring, family reunification, and housing assistance. CJRN serves approximately 5,000 individuals each year.

The CJRN serves individuals 18 years old and above who have had any involvement with the criminal justice system (e.g., jail and/or prison incarceration, arrest, desk appearance ticket (DAT), open court case, etc.). Priority for providing CJRN services is given to individuals who have left jail and/or prison incarceration within the last two years (See Exhibit A) All individuals served reside in and/or have a connection with the five boroughs of New York City.

Exhibit A

BOROUGH	1_YEAR_POPULATION	2_YEAR_POPULATION
Staten Island	2.12	2.36
Queens	20.3	20.05
Outside of New York State	2.12	1.89
Bronx	30.61	35.14
Brooklyn	23.64	20.52
Manhattan	21.21	20.05

Note: Table shows selected-year percentages by borough. Totals sum across rows, not down columns. Data period is from January 2021 to October 2025.

Admission to the program is on a rolling basis. There is no formalized cohort model or application. Individuals are not excluded from participating in the program based on criminal charge or conviction. All services are entirely voluntary.

### III. PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED RFP

MOCJ proposes to issue an RFP to procure qualified vendors to provide transitional services for justice impacted individuals returning home from prison and or jail in each of the five (5) boroughs. There will be a total of 8-10 contracts awarded with 4-5 awards in each competition pool. Applicants may submit up to 2 proposals across the RFP categories for both the CJTN and WERC components of the proposal. An applicant may be granted an award for up to 2 proposals across the RFP categories. The total amount per proposal may be up to \$3.75M. Funding will cover enrollment for approximately 6,000 participants throughout the city annually. Providers will be expected to implement curricula and provide ancillary services to participants as outlined below.



### Program Goals

The goals and objectives for programs selected through the RFP are to reduce the likelihood of repeat criminal justice system involvement by:

1. Offering comprehensive education and employment, therapeutic, and supportive social services to individuals returning to the community from New York City jails.
  - a. A core focus of which is on individuals recently released from incarceration by CJTN providers and placements in permanent employment by WERC providers.
2. Tailoring opportunities and services to individuals' specific risks, needs, and interests, inherently valuing individual choice, and autonomy.
3. Engaging clients in services through building trusting relationships, including employing Peer Mentors, individuals with lived experience in the criminal justice system, to conduct strategic outreach and service delivery.
4. Providing services in neighborhoods with the greatest numbers of individuals released from jail by partnering with local faith-based or cultural institutions, small businesses, and other neighborhood organizations.
5. It is recommended that service providers adapt an operational schedule that is aligned with the DOC discharge protocol. This may come in the form of extended hours of operation and administering services outside of the traditional 9am-5pm Monday through Friday schedule.

## **A. Services Provided**

### **Community Justice Transition Network (CJTN)**

The CJTN will function as the in custody and in community case management and wrap around service provider. CJTN will focus on providing participants the following services:

#### 1. Hybrid In-Custody/In-Community Transition Services

Hybrid in-custody/in-community services are envisioned to connect incarcerated individuals with peer mentors who have lived experience in the criminal justice system and are based in the neighborhoods with the greatest numbers of individuals released from jail. The goal of these hybrid services is to increase community stabilization and reduce the likelihood of further involvement with the criminal justice system.

- a. Peer Mentors- Peer Mentors will develop supportive relationships with individuals coming home from incarceration throughout the transition back to the community. Peer Mentors will offer guidance, practical social and emotional support, and improve the odds of successful reintegration. Through their lived experience, peer mentors have learned how to navigate systems, which in turn can be used to support others as they return to community. Peer Mentors will begin supporting individuals in custody by completing transition

plans and initial assessments, goal setting and resource mapping. In community, these peer mentors will continue to support their mentees with 1:1 mentorship, accountability, accompaniment to social service appointments (if needed) and build pro-social relationships that support their goals.

Peer Mentors should be familiar with communities that have the highest concentrations of individuals returning to community. Peers Mentors may be sourced from the community and CUNY John Jay’s Navigator Certificate Program. The Navigator Certificate Program is a semester-long program that awards college credits and a certificate in Human Services for those with lived experience.

MOCJ envisions that Peer Mentors, Transition Coordinators, and other relevant staff will provide in custody services on Rikers Island and facilities within DOCCS to connect with people in custody and complete comprehensive Risk Need Responsivity (RNR) assessments to assess risk, determine need and begin developing responsive personalized transition plans.

While in DOC custody, city sentenced individuals with upcoming release dates and individuals with upcoming court dates (some people are released from court), will receive an RNR assessment that will be used to create and implement their personalized transition plans. These assessments help to determine an individual’s risk of recidivism based on criminogenic needs. Criminogenic needs are personal and environmental factors directly linked to likelihood of reoffending. By addressing these needs, along with other basic needs such as housing, physical and mental health, vital documents and benefits, individuals will be positioned to have improved outcomes and reduce their likelihood of returning to incarceration.

2. Comprehensive Services in the Community

- a. Intake and Assessment-The provider will have a process to conduct intakes with all participants referred to the program to identify suitability and understand individual’s unique needs. The provider will also assess clients using a validated RNR tool, which separates participants into low-risk, medium-risk and high-risk groups. Validated tools include but are not limited to:

Name	Area
ORAS/OYAS	Generic Risk/Need-Adult/Youth
LS/CMI/YLS/CMI	Generic Risk/Need-Adult/Youth
LS/RNR	Generic Risk/Need-Adult

WRNA	Generic Risk/Need-Adult
COMPAS	Generic Risk/Need-Adult
STRONG	Generic Risk/Need- Adult
PCL/R	Generic Risk- Adult
PACT	Generic Risk/Need- Youth
YASI	Generic Risk/Need- Youth

- b. Based on the assessment, the provider will make a recommendation about whether the client is ready to begin classes or whether there are concerns related to mental health and/or substance misuse that might interfere with their capacity to participate in and benefit from programming at this time.
- c. Therapeutic Services- The provider will address clients' therapeutic needs either in-house directly by the provider or through referral to an external organization. This may include activities such as weekly structured group sessions, regular individual counseling, and training employers in therapeutic techniques to support individuals and help facilitate growth. Programming to address therapeutic needs should be developmentally appropriate, which requires emphasizing a strength-based approach to reinforce the individual's role as a member of the community. Treatment components and dosage will vary depending on the individual client's risks and needs as determined by the validated RNR tool. For example, individuals who have a higher risk of repeat involvement in the criminal justice system often require more intensive services (in terms of frequency and duration of programming), as well as more intensive engagement and retention practices by the program. Selected providers should be prepared to share their intended therapeutic curriculum with MOCJ and others as designated by MOCJ, at the time of award, if the service is provided in-house.
- d. Supportive Social Services- The provider will deliver supportive social services through the prime contracted organization and/or through a network of subcontracts, linkage agreements, and/or local partnerships with external provider organizations and/or neighborhood-based institutions procured by provider which will include but not be limited to:
- Mental health services (e.g., one-on-one therapy, group counseling, psychiatry)
  - Substance use treatment
  - Physical healthcare
  - Transitional Case Management
  - Procurement of vital documents such as birth certificate, social security card, and identification (federal, state, and or city)

- Family support, mediation, and reunification (including parenting classes and working with the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) and the Office of Child Support Services (OCSS))
  - Assistance identifying and securing emergency, temporary, and/or permanent housing (including through NYCHA family reunification, completing housing applications, providing connections to rental assistance, providing emergency and/or transitional housing, etc.)
  - Financial literacy education
  - Benefits and Medicaid enrollment
  - Child-care on-site and/or connections to external child-care options
  - Health education (including sexual health (e.g., HIV, Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI), and Hepatitis B and C prevention) and food and nutrition)
  - Legal services
  - Voting registration and civic engagement education
- e. Outreach and Engagement- The provider will focus on building relationships, addressing individual needs, and fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment. The provider will be expected to adopt and implement key strategies that will improve not only program outcomes but also the success of the individuals being served. The key component of which should be on utilizing Peer Mentors to establish lasting relationships that begin during incarceration and extend into community to improve immediate engagement and long-term retention practices.

**WERC: Targeted Employment Services in the Community**

WERC will function as a set of workforce and education providers within the CJTN but with an exclusive focus on training and placement in employment. WERC providers will also assist in the navigation of educational goals for participants. If needed, traditional wrap around services will be coordinated through the CJTN and need not be provided by WERC providers unless a provider is submitting to service participants through both programs which should be reflected in their proposal. WERC providers will focus their efforts on the following:

1. Employment Opportunities and Services- The provider will offer work force readiness assessments, internships opportunities with internal or external organizations, workforce training, assistance with employment placements, and other related services. Job developers/employment specialists employed by the service provider organization should have small enough caseloads to develop and maintain close relationships with employers, conduct site visits at employer

locations, and address emergent needs that may interfere with job retention and career growth. Additional employment-related supportive services would include, but are not limited to:

- Direct placement in unsubsidized permanent employment
- Job training and job readiness workshops (may be paid)
- Resume writing
- Soft skills development
- Obtaining professional clothing
- Career certifications
- Rap sheet clean-up
- Assistance obtaining identification and vital documents
- Navigation assistance of entrepreneurial pathways

2. Employment Placement & Retention- The provider will work with clients to ascertain employment in the relevant field. It is important that justice impacted community members can tap into supportive resources to minimize turnover and support long-term employment. Employment retention strategies should focus on but not be limited to:

- Creating pathways for growth
- Addressing barriers to career goals
- Providing regular feedback and coaching
- Effective communication and conflict resolution
- Building professional and pro-social relationships on the job (e.g., mentorship, networking)
- Work-life balance
- Navigating company culture
- Addressing burnout and/or lack of motivation

3. Education Opportunities and Services- The provider will offer clients educational services to help individuals navigate educational paths and achieve academic and career goals. Education is an important tool for empowering individuals to enhance their knowledge, skills, critical thinking abilities and support personal growth and development. Education offers individuals opportunities for social and economic mobility and supports pathways for stability. The provider will offer individualized support to ensure that individuals meet their educational goals. Services can be rendered through in-house staff or through partnership with a subcontracted community-based organization (CBO). Education opportunities and services may include but not be limited to:

- Basic and higher education programming and support (e.g., literacy, GED/HSE, college readiness)
- Educational counseling (i.e., career mapping and planning, transferring credits, SMART goal setting, academic advising, career readiness, skill building, personal and social-emotional support)
- Internship placement
- Leveraging Social Media for Networking
- Financial Aid Counseling (i.e., student loans, grants, scholarships and fellowships)
- Certifications
- Referrals to services (i.e., reentry, tutoring, mentorship, etc.)
- Retention and completion support

## **B. Referral Sources**

Referrals to the CJTN will come from Department of Corrections (DOC), NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), city agencies, community-based organizations (CBOs), and community members. The CJTN will also serve as a self-referral entry hub for all justice impacted individuals residing in NYC who are transitioning home from a jail and or prison sentence.

## **C. Data Reporting and Security**

Reentry programs will be expected to provide individual-level, aggregate, and narrative data reports to MOCJ concerning program operations, client enrollment, and implementation. The Program Provider must have an operating system with the ability to collect and manage accurate and up-to-date individual case and program performance data, quality assurance information, and control systems. The Program Provider will ensure data security measures are implemented consistent with NYC Office of Technology and Innovation (NYC OTI) standards and all relevant laws for all identifying information defined in Section 23-1205 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York.

## **D. Liability and Indemnification**

The Program Provider must be well versed in working with justice impacted participants, demonstrate cultural competence, and understand the dynamics and impacts of criminal justice involvement. The Provider is free to subcontract to fulfill the terms necessary to deliver reentry services, in accordance with all local, state, and federal procurement requirements. The Program Provider must indemnify, defend and hold the City harmless in all claims or actions that arise in connection with this program. The Program Provider acknowledges that they are liable for any negligence that occurs by the acts of its employees or employees of their Subcontractor (if applicable). The Provider must ensure onsite security as outlined above and must have experience (directly or through Subcontractor) in providing data security and remain responsible for any data

breaches. Program Provider must indemnify the City of any harm, damages or any other liabilities that result from a data breach.

#### **E. Vendor Performance Reporting Requirements & Data Tracking**

The Program Provider will be expected to engage in regularly scheduled meetings with MOCJ that will require in-person attendance and submit regular reports, with frequency to be determined by MOCJ in coordination with the program providers for the duration of the contract. MOCJ will track outcomes including but not limited to intakes, outreach, trainings, training type, participant demographics (age, race, gender and borough), and job placements. The Program Provider will be expected to have a plan in place to track and use performance metrics – regarding engagement rates, retention rates, and fidelity to the curricula.

For example, the Program Provider will be expected to use pre-/post-surveys to measure client progress (if feasible and safe) or identify and implement alternate measures. The Program Provider will maintain a database for the purpose of monitoring participant progress and program staff performance internally and generating and submitting de-identified reports regularly to MOCJ. The Program Provider will ensure they retain sufficient and necessary data and staff to perform the aforementioned activities. The Provider will also allow for and coordinate site visits and observations of the curricula by MOCJ and stakeholders.

#### **IV. PROPOSED CONTRACT AND PAYMENT STRUCTURE**

It is anticipated that there will be between 8-10 contracts awarded across all five boroughs. Providers may apply to administer either or both In-Custody/In-Community (See Section A.1) or Education and Employment services under this CJTN RFP. Additionally, the Provider is permitted to enter into subcontracts with other services providers to deliver some portion of the services outlined above. The contract will include a hybrid performance based and line-item payment structure that will be subject to annual deliverables and milestones as agreed upon with MOCJ.

#### **V. FUNDING**

Total annual funding amount shall not exceed \$30,111,449.00 across all five boroughs per year, for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$90,334,347.00 for three years.

#### **VI. CONTRACT PERIOD**

It is anticipated that the first contract term will be for a period of three years starting on July 1, 2026, with an option for up to 2 three-year renewals.

#### **VII. BASIS FOR AWARD**

Award selections will be based on the highest technically rated proposal(s). The applicant selected for the award will have demonstrated successful experience providing similar services to similar

populations as those targeted by the RFP. Proposals will be evaluated according to criteria that will include successful relevant experience, organizational capacity, and proposed approach to the program model.

### **VIII. PROCUREMENT TIMELINE**

It is anticipated the RFP will be released in March 2026 if not earlier, with contracts starting July 1, 2026.

### **IX. USE OF PASSPORT**

PASSPort is a web-based system maintained by the city of New York to manage procurement. To submit comments to the upcoming RFP, all vendors must create an account within the PASSPort system. Please visit [www.nyc.gov/passport](http://www.nyc.gov/passport) to create an account or to log into the system to view this Concept Paper and the future RFP.

### **X. REQUIRED SERVICE PRE-QUALIFICATIONS**

The Community Justice Transition Network (CJTN) RFP will be released exclusively through the PASSPort system. To become eligible to apply for this and other HHS RFPs, visit <http://www.nyc.gov/passport>.

### **XI. COMMENTS**

Please email written comments to [MOCJProcurements@mocj.nyc.gov](mailto:MOCJProcurements@mocj.nyc.gov) no later than **February 26, 2026**. Place “CJTN Concept Paper” in the subject line. Questions regarding this RFP must be transmitted in writing to the Agency Contact. Please email comments to [MOCJProcurements@mocj.nyc.gov](mailto:MOCJProcurements@mocj.nyc.gov).

All feedback to the concept paper must be submitted via the City’s digital procurement system, PASSPort (<https://www.nyc.gov/site/mocs/passport/about-passport.page>). If you do not already have a PASSPort account, select the tab “Register NYC.ID” on that page.

For assistance with technical issues relating to the PASSPort system, please contact the Mayor’s Office of Contract Services (MOCS) via MOCS Service Desk MOCS Service Desk (<https://mocssupport.atlassian.net/servicedesk/customer/portal/8>)

Please note, all responses to the concept paper must be received no later than **December 29, 2025**