

# THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

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**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\***

## ***Defenders, Advocates and Elected Officials to City Hall: New Yorkers Incarcerated in Local Jails Need Greater Voting Access Immediately***

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society, New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, People’s Coalition for Manhattan DA Accountability, local elected officials, advocates, impacted New Yorkers and others [held](#) a press conference earlier this afternoon demanding greater access to voting for people incarcerated at local jails.

This press conference comes after Legal Aid and 35 other organizations, along with mayoral candidates, released a [public letter](#) to the Board of Elections, Board of Correction, and Mayor's Office outlining specific steps that should be taken to ensure that eligible voters in City jails have prompt and secure ballot access without being hindered, including setting up and announcing poll sites, hiring outside volunteers to provide voter education and assist people with filling out voting forms, and ensuring that absentee ballots are delivered to the BOE, among other demands.

“With the 2021 election just weeks away, our clients need prompt and secure access to the ballot box for what will be one of the most important elections of our lifetime as New Yorkers,” said **Anthony Posada, Supervising Attorney with the Community Justice Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “As such, we are calling the City to prioritize our clients’ right to vote and to implement the steps that will ensure our clients unabridged access to participate in our democracy. This action cannot wait and we demand action now.”

“When we talk about voter suppression laws across the country, we often forget about places, like New York City, where it doesn't present as publicly. The majority of New Yorkers on Rikers are being held pre-trial– and in direct violation of the law, they are not being given equitable access to register or vote. This silences the voices of thousands of Black, Brown, and primarily low income New Yorkers. This City must realize a new vision of justice, one that includes making voter education, registration, and on-site voting easily available to all inside. An engaged community must leave no one behind,” said **New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams**.

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*The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated*

*for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. [www.legalaidnyc.org](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)*