



MEDIA ADVISORY

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FORMERLY INCARCERATED ADVOCATES AND ALLIES CALL FOR URGENT DECARCERATION TO PREVENT MORE DEATHS ON RIKERS

WHEN: Tuesday August 31, 2021, 10am - 11am

WHERE: Broadway and Murray Street (west side of City Hall)

WHO: Survivors of Rikers, [New York City Jails Action Coalition](#), #HALTsolitary Campaign

WHAT: Survivors of Rikers, family members of those incarcerated in NYC jails, and other advocates will gather outside City Hall on Tuesday to call on the Mayor to move swiftly to reduce the jail population - the only rational solution to the rapidly-intensifying human rights crisis on Rikers Island. The Mayor can directly reduce the number of people in jail by granting early release to those serving City sentences, and must also urge judges and District Attorneys to use their powers to decarcerate by releasing those currently awaiting trial and refraining from sending any more people to City jails.

BACKGROUND:

A [recent letter](#) from the Nunez federal monitor, along with the tragic death of Brandon Rodriguez on August 10th, has brought attention to the crisis that has been growing on Rikers Island for months. Amid a steadily rising jail census and mass absenteeism by correction officers,

incarcerated people report that they are being denied food, medical attention, transport to court dates, and are left on de facto lockdown for hours at a time when their units are unstaffed. The City jail population dropped significantly from March to April 2020, but has since been swelling. In a blatant effort to undermine bail reform, judges are sending increasing numbers of people to jail, and COVID-related court delays have stalled cases indefinitely. In July, the Department of Correction reported that 989 pre-trial detainees had been in custody longer than 600 days. Decarceration is the only solution, especially when 93% of those held on Rikers are awaiting trial or a parole hearing.

