



January 4, 2022

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

Legal Aid Calls for Decarceration as the COVID-19 Infection Rate Continues to Skyrocket in New York City Jails

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society [called](#) for decarceration in response to data released by New York City's Correctional Health Services (CHS) showing that the COVID-19 infection rate continues to skyrocket at local jails. According to CHS, yesterday's [report](#) shows a seven-day average positivity rate of 37 percent and 502 active infections. With a reported prevalence of 9.47 percent, which means that nearly one in ten people in New York City Department of Correction (DOC) custody had an active infection on January 2, 2022.

According to [data](#) released by the City, the seven-day average infection rate among the general public is around 33.5 percent, over three percentage points lower than the rate currently ravaging City jails.

"Omicron is ripping through City jails, yet judges, District Attorneys and the City have all refused to implement the only meaningful solution to prevent further spread, suffering and possible loss of life: decarceration," said **Tina Luongo, Attorney-In-Charge of the Criminal Defense Practice at The Legal Aid Society**. "We call on all these stakeholders, including elected officials, to do right by their constituents, New Yorkers, to immediately decrease the local jail population."

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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 145 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