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

***Legal Aid Statement in Response to NYC Board of Correction Report on 2021  
Suicides and Drug-Related Deaths in NYC DOC Custody***

(NEW YORK, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society** issued the following statement in response to a New York City Board of Correction (BOC) [report](#) on 2021 suicides and drug-related deaths in New York City Department of Correction (DOC) custody:

“We commend the Board of Correction for their report on the deaths at Rikers last year, which we hope will publicly highlight for all New Yorkers the shockingly inhumane conditions inside City jails and the horrific circumstances under which these people died.

Once again, this report demonstrates the sprawling brokenness of the jail systems responsible for keeping people alive, including failures in basic rounding, failures to provide emergency medical aid, failures to identify suicide risks or clear signs of medical distress, missed medical appointments, and posts that are unstaffed or temporarily abandoned.

It should be clear to everyone that this fundamental correctional incompetence and callous disregard for human life continues in 2022 under yet another administration - we need look back only two weeks to see the consequences of that culture in the tragic death of our client Michael Nieves. We should all be outraged that the Adams Administration continues to tolerate the gross incompetence of its staff and leadership.

The systemic failures that led to these deaths highlight why Legal Aid has sought the appointment of a receiver: Mayor Adams and Commissioner Molina have not demonstrated that they are capable of running the city jails.

We ask that Mayor Adams articulate what *additional* clear and immediate actions the City will take to address not only the failures of basic correctional procedure, but of staff’s repeated disregard for the basic dignity and humanity of persons in DOC custody. We further demand that all stakeholders in the City commit to swift decarceration efforts, as this is one of many reports that demonstrates that New Yorkers are not safe in DOC custody.”

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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 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](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)*