

July 16, 2024

Contact:

Audrey Martin
AMartin@legal-aid.org

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

Legal Aid Statement on the Passing of Charizma Jones, a LAS Client Who Died Shortly After Release from Rikers Island

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society released the below statement in response to the death of [Charizma Jones](#), a Legal Aid client who passed away shortly after she was released from New York City Department of Correction (DOC) custody:

“Words cannot express our sadness and outrage over the sudden death of Charizma Jones, who was just 23 years old when she passed away Sunday night following her release from DOC custody.

“Over the weekend, we learned that while Ms. Jones was incarcerated at Rikers Island, she experienced a medical emergency, but was repeatedly denied initial care by DOC staff. Subsequently, her condition worsened, and she was transferred to a local hospital.

“The circumstances surrounding Ms. Jones’ death warrants transparency and an expeditious and independent investigation. We demand that any correction officers who blocked her access to medical care face immediate suspension, and DOC must preserve all evidence - including recent camera footage - that exists of Ms. Jones during her time in custody.

“With each of these tragedies, City Hall and DOC leadership routinely deny defense counsel, the client’s family, and the general public the most basic information on exactly what transpired. This is cruel and unacceptable, and DOC must be held accountable for their actions in Ms. Jones’ final hours.

“Our heart aches for her friends, family, community, and all those New Yorkers who have been impacted by the death of a loved one as a result of the City's jail system.”

###

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. <https://www.legalaidnyc.org>