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

***Statement in Response to Two DOI Reports that Found DOC Lacks Sufficient Controls to Prevent Contraband Smuggling by Corrections Officers into City Jails***

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society released the following statement in response to two [reports](#) issued by the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) that found the New York City Department of Correction (DOC) lacks sufficient controls to prevent contraband smuggling by DOC officers into City jails and bases its drug control policies on demonstrably wrong testing:

“The contraband report confirms what we already know: DOC employees have long been trafficking contraband — including harmful substances such as deadly narcotics that have contributed to reported overdoses among the incarcerated population — into Rikers Island, compromising the safety of people in DOC custody and the integrity of the City’s jail system.

“Not only has the City failed to implement law enforcement’s previous guidance on this issue, but it has also backtracked by reversing a ban on cargo pants, which was intended to reduce staff smuggling. Instead of holding staff accountable, DOC has doubled down on punitive measures against incarcerated people, such as hostile and violent searches by riot squads, isolation, and limits on contact with families and loved ones.

“The fentanyl report illustrates the dangers of using junk science to drive policy. DOI found that 85 percent of DOC’s rapid fentanyl tests were false positives, yet DOC specifically relied upon these false positives in describing the actual fentanyl prevalence in the jails.

“These reports serve as yet another example of DOC's utter inability to manage the local jail system effectively. These issues have persisted under multiple administrations and correctional commissioners, underscoring the urgent need for an outside actor, such as a receiver, to deliver on the wholesale reforms needed to improve conditions in New York City jails.”

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