



**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON CRIME VICTIMS, CRIME & CORRECTION
ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE ON CORRECTION**

NOTICE OF JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: Safety of Persons in Custody, Transparency, and Accountability within State Correctional Facilities

PURPOSE: Examination of causes, contributing factors, and solutions for increasing safety of persons in custody, transparency, and accountability in correctional facilities operated by the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS)

**Wednesday
May 14, 2025
10:00 AM
Hearing Room B
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248**

ORAL TESTIMONY BY INVITATION ONLY

Recent events in correctional facilities under the supervision of the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), including the high-profile deaths of Robert Brooks at Marcy Correctional Facility in December 2024 and Messiah Nantwi at Mid-State Correctional Facility in March 2025, as well as an unsanctioned work stoppage, have intensified concerns regarding the conditions within such facilities.

According to the Correctional Association of New York (CANY), 143 incarcerated individuals died while in DOCCS custody in 2024, representing a 34% increase from the previous year. While the causes of death for these individuals vary, this trend points to systemic safety and security issues within state correctional facilities. Heightened attention has been drawn to the well-being of incarcerated individuals amid a growing culture of violence and lack of accountability for in-custody deaths and other critical incidents, particularly those involving allegations of physical and sexual abuse. This has led to overarching questions regarding existing complaint and investigation processes, oversight both within and of the facilities, lack of data collection and transparency, and ongoing staffing issues.

For these reasons, the Senate Standing Committee on Crime Victims, Crime, and Correction and the Assembly Standing Committee on Correction will conduct a public hearing to examine the current conditions, operations, and oversight of DOCCS facilities as it relates to increasing safety, transparency, and accountability within the state's correctional system. The Committees are seeking feedback on causes, contributing factors, and solutions for increasing safety, transparency, and accountability within state correctional institutions, with topics including, but not limited to the safety and security of incarcerated individuals; complaints, investigations, and oversight processes; data collection; programming opportunities; staffing ratios; screening processes; facility and equipment upgrades; and visitation and access to the facilities.

Persons invited to present pertinent testimony to the Committees at the above hearing should complete and return the enclosed reply form as soon as possible. It is important that the reply form be fully completed and returned so that persons may be notified in the event of emergency postponement or cancellation. The Committees also invite members of the public, especially those with current or past contact with the State correctional system, to submit written testimony for the Committees' consideration. Written testimony may be submitted by email to the contacts listed on the reply form.

Oral testimony will be limited to 5 minutes' duration. Ten copies of any prepared testimony should be submitted at the hearing registration desk. The Committees would appreciate advance receipt of prepared statements.

Attendees and participants at any legislative public hearing should be aware that these proceedings are video recorded. Their likenesses may be included in any video coverage shown on television or the internet.

In order to meet the needs of those who may have a disability, the Committees, in accordance with the Legislature's policies of non-discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), have made their facilities and services available to all individuals with disabilities. For individuals with disabilities, accommodations will be provided, upon reasonable request, to afford such individuals access and admission to State Legislature facilities and activities.

Julia Salazar
Member of the Senate
Chair, Committee on Crime
Victims, Crime & Correction

Erik Dilan
Member of the Assembly
Chair, Committee on
Correction

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING REPLY FORM

Persons invited to present testimony at the joint public hearing on safety of persons in custody, oversight, and accountability within state correctional facilities are requested to complete this reply form as soon as possible, but no later than May 9, 2025 for those seeking to testify in person, and no later than May 12, 2025 for those seeking to submit written testimony. Please return this form by mail, email, or fax to both:

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Oral Testimony by Invitation Only

- I plan to attend the public hearing on safety of persons in custody, oversight, and accountability within state correctional facilities to be conducted by the Senate Standing Committee on Crime Victims, Crime & Correction and the Assembly Standing Committee on Correction on May 14, 2025.

- I have been invited to make a public statement at the above hearing. My statement will be limited to 5 minutes, and I will answer any questions which may arise. I will provide 10 copies of my prepared statement.

- I will address my remarks to the following subjects:

- I do not plan to attend the above hearing.

- I would like to be added to the Committees' mailing list for notices and reports.

- I would like to be removed from the Committees' mailing list.

- I will require assistance and/or handicapped accessibility information.

Please specify the type of assistance required:

NAME:

TITLE:

ORGANIZATION:

ADDRESS:

E-MAIL:

TELEPHONE / FAX: