



**NEW YORK CITY
BOARD OF CORRECTION**

**MARCH 11, 2025
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

ATTENDEES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Dwayne C. Sampson, Chair
Helen Skipper, Vice Chair
Robert L. Cohen, M.D., Member
Hon. Barry A. Cozier (Ret.), Member
Felipe Franco, Member
Jacqueline Pitts, Member
Jude Torchenaud, Member

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION (DOC)

Francis Torres, First Deputy Commissioner
James Conroy, Deputy Commissioner of Legal Matters/General Counsel
James Boyd, Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Operations
James Saunders, Deputy Commissioner of Health Affairs
Patrick Gallahue, Deputy Commissioner of Public Information
Kathleen Zadzora, Assistant Commissioner of Health Affairs
Allie Robertson, Executive Director of Intergovernmental Affairs
Jenelle Bazil-Charles, Director of Strategic Partnerships of Intergovernmental Affairs
Nell McCarty, Deputy Commissioner of Programs and Community Partnerships
Mark Pauly, Deputy Director of Strategic Partnerships
Allison Pace, Associate Commissioner of Facility Operations
Raymond Sanchez, Assistant Deputy Warden of the Custody Management Centralized Movement Unit

NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS – CORRECTIONAL HEALTH SERVICES (CHS)

Patsy Yang, DrPH, Senior Vice President
Nancy Arias, RN, Chief Nursing Officer/Deputy Executive Director
Nicole Levy, Director, Communications & Intergovernmental Affairs
Jeanette Merrill, Sr. Assistant Vice President, Communications & External Affairs

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Shilpa Rao, Urban Justice Center
Jin Heo, Urban Justice Center

Jennifer Parish, Urban Justice Center
Garrett Salzman, Urban Justice Center
Ryan Acquattro, Freedom Agenda and Urban Justice Center
Michael Klinger, Brooklyn Defenders
Natalie Fiorenzo, NYCDS
Chaplain Dr. Victoria A. Phillips, Visionary V Ministries and Jail Action Coalition
Fran Geteles, HALT Solitary
Barbara Opatowsky, NYC Bar Association
Nathaniel Evans, OPA
Rebecca Carter, NYCDS
Khari Jenkins, NYCDS
Roya Taran, NYCDS
Alex Kroles, The City
Kayla Simpson, Legal Aid Society
Danielle Gerard, Children's Rights
Caroline Mosley

Approval of March 11, 2025 Meeting Agenda

Chair Dwayne Sampson called the meeting to order with a quorum of members present. He requested a motion to approve the agenda of the Board's March 11, 2025 meeting. Upon being moved and seconded, the agenda was unanimously approved. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Approval of the February 11, 2025 Public Meeting Minutes

Chair Sampson requested a motion to approve the draft public meeting minutes of the Board's February 11, 2025 meeting. Upon being moved and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Public Comment Period – People in Custody

Comments from people in custody were played. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Executive Director Update

Executive Director Jasmine Georges-Yilla shared condolences with the families of Ramel Powell and Terrence Moore, who both died in DOC custody after the February Board meeting. ED Georges-Yilla also shared condolences with the families of Department staff who have passed since the February meeting.

As of March 10, 2025, the approximate total census of people in custody is 6,966, a 2.86% increase since the last Board meeting. As of March 10, the census numbers by facility were as follows: BHPW (50), EHPW (10), EMTC (1,702), GRVC (892), NIC (264), OBCC (1,575), RESH (177), RMSC (416), RNDP (1,137), and WF (738).

ED Georges-Yilla noted that the Board would consider a request from the Department to renew a limited four-month variance suspending the Board's overcrowding minimum standards in certain housing areas in OBCC. Although the West Facility Annex and EMTC were not included in the Department's initial variance request, the Department has increased the beds at standard within each of those facilities to more than the maximum 50 allowed in a

dormitory unit, thus violating the Board's Minimum Standards.

The Department seeks to renew the four-month limited overcrowding variance applied to OBCC, in addition to requesting variances for the facilities that are currently not in compliance with the Board's overcrowding minimum standards.

Regarding the Special Management Unit (SMU), Board staff have continually audited SMU since it opened on February 6, 2025 to evaluate DOC's compliance with Directive #4492, which outlines the policies and procedures governing the unit. Based on our review of SMU's policies, visits to the unit, and interviews with persons in custody and uniformed staff, concerns remain about the unit's operations and its impact on the incarcerated population.

In addition to the Department's failure to comply with several of the Board's minimum standards upon opening the SMU, Board staff have observed significant inconsistencies between Directive #4492 and the operation of the unit. Based on Board staff's continued observations, concerns remain regarding restraints, lockout time, law library, recreation, religious services, telephones, access to medical and mental health care, correspondence and packages, visits, personal hygiene, staff training, due process and Support Services Plans. Specifically, regarding religious services, for the first four weeks after the SMU opened (2/6/25 – 3/6/25), persons in custody had not been escorted to the mosque on Fridays for congregational Jumma services. After the Board notified the Department of its violation of Minimum Standard § 1-07, regarding congregational religious services, the Department, on March 7th, allowed individuals to attend Muslim services in the OBCC mosque for the first time since SMU opened. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Limited variance on Minimum Standards §§ 1-04(c)(2), 1-04(c)(3), and 104(c)(5)(i) (overcrowding)

Chair Sampson expressed concerns that the Department proceeded with adding beds above the allowable limit in the Board's minimum standards without first seeking a variance from the Board.

DOC's Assistant Deputy Warden of the Custody Management Centralized Movement Unit, Raymond Sanchez, presented the Department's request to renew the limited variance regarding overcrowding Minimum Standards in OBCC. Assistant Deputy Warden Sanchez spoke on census numbers, the Department's use of the 6A program, and bed installations in OBCC since November 2024. DOC acknowledged that it did not include the West Facility Annex and EMTC in its initial variance request, and is requesting variances to add beds to both facilities at today's meeting. Assistant Deputy Warden Sanchez described the use of additional beds in the West Facility Annex and EMTC since November 2024 and the need for additional bedspace in these areas. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Board members asked DOC staff questions about the overcrowding variance requests. See this portion of the video [here](#).

The Board heard in-person and virtual public comment about the Department's overcrowding variance requests. See this portion of the video [here](#).

ED Georges-Yilla summarized the Department's limited variance renewal request to increase bed capacity at OBCC. See this portion of the video [here](#). Upon being moved and seconded, the motion to vote on the requested OBCC overcrowding variance renewal was approved and Chair Sampson opened the floor for debate. See this portion of the video [here](#).

The Board considered and discussed conditions submitted by Board Member Cohen and asked DOC further questions about their requested variances. See this portion of the video [here](#). Following debate, ED Georges-Yilla read the variance conditions that the Board members agreed to vote on. See this portion of the video [here](#) and read the approved conditions [here](#).

Upon being moved and seconded, Board members unanimously voted to approve the conditions added to the OBCC variance renewal request, including limiting the variance period to two months (to expire May 13, 2025). See this portion of the video [here](#). Upon being moved and seconded, a majority of Board members approved the two-month OBCC overcrowding variance renewal request with the previously approved conditions. Board Members Skipper, Cozier, Franco, Pitts, Torchenaud and Chair Sampson voted in the affirmative. Board Member Cohen voted against the motion. See this portion of the video [here](#).

ED Georges-Yilla summarized the Department's limited variance request to increase bed capacity at West Facility Annex. Upon being moved and seconded, Board members unanimously voted to incorporate the same conditions appended to the OBCC overcrowding request to the West Facility Annex variance request, including limiting the variance period to two months (to expire May 13, 2025). Upon being moved and seconded, a majority of Board members approved the two-month West Facility Annex overcrowding variance request with the previously approved conditions. Board Members Skipper, Cozier, Franco, Pitts, Torchenaud and Chair Sampson voted in the affirmative. Board Member Cohen abstained. See this portion of the video [here](#) and review the approved variance with conditions [here](#).

ED Georges-Yilla summarized the Department's limited variance request to increase bed capacity at EMTC. Upon being moved and seconded, Board members unanimously voted to incorporate the same conditions appended to the OBCC overcrowding request to the EMTC variance request, including limiting the variance period to two months (to expire May 13, 2025). Upon being moved and seconded, a majority of Board members approved the two-month EMTC overcrowding variance request with the previously approved conditions. Board Members Skipper, Cozier, Franco, Pitts, Torchenaud and Chair Sampson voted in the affirmative. Board Member Cohen voted against the motion. See this portion of the video [here](#) and review the approved variance with conditions [here](#).

Update on the operation of SMU

Assistant Deputy Warden Sanchez provided updates on the census in the unit and the Department's consideration and implementation of the Board's recommendations regarding operations. See this portion of the video [here](#). Board members asked DOC staff questions about SMU operations, including about visiting procedures, attendance to

Jummah services, necessity for a new restrictive housing area, and classification. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Access to religious services (Minimum Standard §1-07)

Deputy Commissioner of Programs and Community Partnerships Nell McCarty spoke about provision of religious services, specifically Jummah services, and DOC's work to facilitate the observance of Ramadan. Board members asked follow-up questions about participation in Ramadan observance by people housed in restrictive areas, issues with affording services in SMU, access to mental health services and programming, and criteria for placement in SMU. See this portion of the video [here](#).

DOC plan for tracking scheduled and unscheduled sick call visits pursuant to BOC Minimum Standard § 3-02(c)(5) (Sick-Call Records)

Deputy Commissioner of Health Affairs James Saunders provided an update on this topic. DOC and CHS exchanged data to determine fields to be included in their joint scheduling dashboard, which is estimated to be completed by the end of this calendar year. According to DC Saunders, the goal of the dashboard is that all scheduled clinic appointments, including sick call, are tracked in the shared system. CHS Senior Vice President Patsy Yang stated that CHS schedules appointments for patients they want to see on a call-down list. DOC asked to create a dashboard that shows patients CHS has already asked to see, which is distinct from the DOC sick call process, according to Senior Vice President Yang. Board members asked questions about sick call. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Board Member Cohen introduced a motion to establish a Board committee to review the sick call process and its operational and clinical efficiency. Upon being moved and seconded, the motion passed unanimously. See this portion of the video [here](#).

Public Comment

The Board heard in-person and virtual public comments from Shilpa Rao, Jin Heo, Jennifer Parrish, Garrett Salzman, Michael Klinger, Natalie Fiorenzo, Chaplain Dr. Victoria A. Phillips, Fran Geteles, Kayla Simpson, Danielle Gerard, and Caroline Mosley. See this portion of the video [here](#).

The next public meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2025 at 1:00 pm.