



2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Fair Chance for Housing Act would eliminate housing providers' ability to use background checks on applicants to protect people with conviction records from discrimination. Housing discrimination is one of the greatest burdens that individuals with a criminal history currently face. The majority of individuals released from state prisons to New York City end up being funneled directly into homeless shelters, creating a cycle of homelessness and then recidivism.

Reentry from the Inside Out (RIO) recognizes that "reentry" services for individuals who have conviction histories must start before they have actually been released. Prisons and social service agencies will now be required to accept and assist with applications six months prior to release. Agencies will also be required to keep and maintain the applications of individuals who were granted parole instead of being released, and The Department of Corrections and Community Supervision must develop a program to provide a state-issued identification card to each individual upon their release.

Body Cameras for Correctional Officers would require correctional officers to wear body cameras within correctional facilities. While the use of body cameras by police departments in New York State has become a well-accepted means of oversight, they are used less frequently by correctional institutions. Both a state and city bill would require that body cameras be turned on during all times of contact with the incarcerated population and that all videos be downloaded and cataloged by the supervisor of every officer. In addition, the departments will be required to issue a yearly report that details the use and evaluates the effectiveness of the cameras, including what impact they had on the use of physical force, serious injury and death.

Less is More Act: Community Supervision Revocation Reform Act would eliminate incarceration as a form of punishment for most technical violations of parole, such as missing a meeting with a parole officer or showing up late for curfew. Instead of incarceration, this bill would make it so that parolees cited for a violation would be issued a notice instead, and individuals would be provided with a speedy hearing to adjudicate the matter.

Elder Parole addresses the fact that thousands of New Yorkers are serving prison sentences that amount to death-by-incarceration, even without an actual life sentence. This bill would require the Board of Parole to evaluate all inmates over the age of 55 who have served at least 15 years in prison for possible parole release. This bill emphasizes the fact that most incarcerated individuals do change over time and should be granted the possibility of rehabilitated freedom.

Fair and Timely Parole bill would require that the Parole Board grant parole to all eligible people in prison unless there is a "current and unreasonable" risk that parole would not be safe for the community. This bill would drastically change both the nature and purpose of the parole system in New York State.

Clean Slate Law would require a time-based automatic expungement of the criminal record of almost all New Yorkers who have successfully served their sentence and not incurred subsequent convictions. Under this law, a misdemeanor conviction would be automatically and fully expunged five years after sentencing and seven years after felony conviction, as long as a person is no longer on probation or parole and has no pending criminal charges in the state. This law will make expungements automatic after time and addresses the enormous range of civil consequences that come with a criminal conviction in New York.

End Predatory Court Fees and **Eliminate Parole and Probation Fees** bills were designed to eliminate the burdensome fees that come with a criminal case in court, parole, or probation. The End Predatory Court Fees Act would eliminate court fees, mandatory minimum fines, and incarceration on the basis of unpaid fines and fees. It was introduced alongside Eliminate Parole and Probation Fees, which aims to eliminate similar fines and fees that come with the parole and probation system.