

# Adams Administration Unfit to Lead Rikers: A Timeline

100 days in office and every action Adams takes, conditions only worsen This is a log of all the Rikers related actions that Mayor Eric Adams and Commissioner Molina have made since entering office

## JANUARY

**JAN 1** Department of Corrections Commissioner Louis A. Molina reversed new sick leave policy, allowing staff to call out sick without providing medical documentation from Mount Sinai doctors. This makes it easier for staff to abuse sick leave. He also stopped suspending CO's for AWOL and sick leave abuse.

**JAN 3** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days' time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**JAN 7** Detainees go on a week-long **hunger strike** due to jail conditions.

**JAN 27** Molina refuses to share any information with oversights, including the Federal Monitor and City Council, and does not provide a reason why during the City Council Meeting.

**JAN 31** Molina issues press release claiming 1,000 long-term AWOL Correction Officers returned to work, which is misleading. An additional 1,000 Officers called out over the holidays and were merely coming back after their break. Staffing levels were actually still at the same "crisis" level as in August 2021.

 Missed medical appointments that officers did not take inmates to in Jan: **6,792**

## FEBRUARY

**FEB 17** Molina fires Ray Spinella, who was hired specifically to assist with staffing concerns.

**MID FEB** Molina ignores Federal Monitor's request for a briefing on safety and security, claiming he had "no time" for the Federal Monitor.

**FEB 27** Detainee Tarz Youngblood **dies** of a fentanyl and heroin overdose after being found unresponsive at the George R. Vierno Center (GRVC). The Board of Correction report highlighted that he was not checked on for 3 hours, when they should have been making proper rounds to his cell every 30 minutes.

**END OF FEB** Thousands of officers still out. Number of suspensions of staff for Use of Force-related misconduct since January: 2

 Missed medical appointments in Feb: **8,402**

## MARCH

**MAR 7** Staff return tally: Only 71 more CO's at work than in August 2021, when the "staffing crisis" began, meaning 2250 are still not showing up to work.

**MAR 9** Molina secretly issues internal memo loosening Captains' requirements, lessening facility tours and ridding the mandate to check that cells are properly locked. The memo is rescinded when the Federal Monitor finds out.

**MAR 16** Federal Monitor issues scathing "Special Report" on Molina's management, criticizing long-term lack of progress with reforms. Highlighted worsening conditions, including:

- Molina's refusal to communicate with the Monitor
- His interference with the Monitor's attempts to speak with DOC staff
- Molina's refusal to provide data

**MAR 17** Detainee George Pagan **dies** at the Eric M. Taylor Center (EMTC); no uniform staff were on post to assist.

**MAR 18** Detainee Herman Diaz **dies** at the Eric M. Taylor Center (EMTC) while choking on an orange; no uniform staff were on post to assist.

**MAR 23** Molina discloses he has started housing warring gang members together, which leads to greatly increased assaults.

**MAR 23** City Council Preliminary Budget Hearing, Molina unable to answer a number of questions:

- **Whether Molina has enough staff and, if not, how many he would need to run a safe jail.**
- Number of staff expected to return by end of the year
- Number of investigations into sick leave abuse and AWOL since Jan 2022
- Ability to clear the disciplinary backlog by end of fiscal year
- Officer to detainee ratio
- Current number of staff working triple shifts
- How many posts are staffed each day
- Breakdown of staffing costs
- Budget allocated to staff training in LGBTQ+ initiatives
- Cost of Risk Management Accountability System (RMAS), slated to replace Solitary Confinement
- Timeline of staffing assessment with Office of Management and Budget

- Ability to track participation and effectiveness of programming
- Whether 11 detainees who were transferred to ICE custody had a judicial warrant

- Number of detainees who needed medical care in the last year
- Number of detainees with chronic illness or in need of daily medical care
- Ability to track missed medical appointments
- Number of missed medical appointments due to lack of escort staff
- Average wait time between time of detainee injury and clinic visit

**MAR 25** Two days after City Council hearing, Molina's General Counsel resigns.

 Missed medical appointments in Mar: **12,745** A **81% increase** compared to December.

## APRIL

**APR 1** Molina appoints Assistant Deputy Warden Wayne Prince, who is under DOC investigation for stealing time, to oversee sick leave investigations.

**APR 5** Molina misses scheduled meeting with Federal Monitor and Nunez plaintiffs; meeting was meant to discuss any improvements made since Monitor's scathing Special Report.

**APR 6** Giant machete found in the Otis Bantum Correctional Center (OBCC); due to size, must have been brought in by DOC staff.

**APR 7** Massive security breach when two individuals passed through security checkpoints and onto Rikers Island without being stopped.

**APR 14** Molina skips second status meeting with Federal prosecutors, the Federal Monitor and Legal Aid to discuss DOC's compliance under Nunez, to attend the car show at the Javits Center.

**APR 14** Molina staffs 50+ officers at the front gate with no experience to prevent contraband entry, and calls it a "security plan".

**APR 26** Mayor Adams announces he will budget for 578 more Correction Officers, despite Molina never providing data/justification for increased staffing. Adams manipulatively claims that he is filling spots of CO's out on AWOL, but those positions are already budgeted for.

 Missed medical appointments in Apr: **11,789** A **67% increase** compared to December.

## MAY

**MAY 6** Mayor Adams briefly visits Rikers Island for the first time since becoming Mayor; does not tour, does not speak with detainees; merely congratulates staff.

**MAY 7** Detainee Dashawn Carter **dies** at Anna M. Kross Center, by hanging himself, 2 days after arriving on Rikers.

**MAY 9** 22 Eric M. Taylor Center (EMTC) posts go unmanned.

**MAY 9** Board of Correction issues report on the three Rikers deaths from Feb and March; the Board of Corrections finds that the Department of Corrections and the Correctional Health Services mismanagement led to all three deaths, including unstaffed posts and missed medical appointments.

**MAY 10** Adams' new appointee to Board of Correction, Joseph Ramos, calls Rikers island deaths "natural" to deflect responsibility from Molina and Mayor Adams.

**MAY 10** BOC members testify that conditions at the North Infirmary Command on Rikers Island violate the HALT Act and is the functioning equivalent of solitary confinement: "it struck me as a cage."

**MAY 12** Mayor Adams announces interagency Task Force to address the crisis on Rikers, with no additional information or metrics for improvements.

**MAY 17** New York Supreme Court Order finds Dept. of Correction in contempt of court, ordering them to pay approximately \$190,000 to plaintiffs if they don't begin providing basic access to care within 30 days.

**MAY 18** The Monitoring team publically introduces a "City Plan" to avoid receivership. The plan is inadequate, recycled, and unworkable.

**MAY 19** Female Detainee Mary Yehudah **dies** of an overdose after being transferred from Rose M. Singer Center to Elmhurst Hospital Center. Commissioner Molina had reversed Previous DOC Commissioner Schiraldi's decision to move female inmates out of Rikers. Had he not, Yehudah would never have been on Rikers.

**MAY 24** Federal Judge Swain calls Mayor Adams' and Commissioner Molina's plan "too vague," and gives DOC until June 10 to provide additional detail to the more crucial areas. Molina calls the plan "sufficient."

**MAY 20** 20-year-old Emanuel Sullivan becomes the 6th person to die on Rikers Island in 2022. The young man was found dead in his bed at Robert N. Davoren Center.

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## JUNE

**JUN 18** Antonio Bradley **dies** by suicide. Bradley was left for 6-9 minutes before anyone assisted. DOC compassionately released a brain-dead Mr. Bradley so that when he officially died, DOC would not have to report it; DOC did not report his death, although they were aware he died, which delayed and tarnished the Attorney General and DOI investigations.

**JUN 20** Anibal Carrasquillo **dies** by overdose. Days before his OD, Carrasquillo was detained at OBCC. Upon closing OBCC, he was moved to GRVC, where drugs and violence are rampant. His death was a result of insufficient tours, understaffed posts, and the closure of OBCC.

**JUN 21** Albert Drye **dies**, the third death in less than a week and ninth to pass in 2022.

**JUN 22** Mayor Adams visits Rikers only for 30 minutes. He defends Correction Officers, saying "I am not ashamed of you I am proud of you. Keep doing the job you are doing."

**JUN 22** Mayor Adams stated in a press release that "slashings and stabbings have fallen 63 percent since March." This is misleading cherry-picking. According to Vital City, there has been a 51% increase in stabbings vs. this time last year.

**JUN 28** Brendan McGuire, Mayor Adams' Chief Counsel, stated in a city council hearing that because his Task Force falls under NYC Law Dept, Attorney Client privilege limits what the Department of Correction can share, further blunting transparency in the department.

## JULY

**JUL 5** Molina reintroduced cargo pants as part of CO uniforms, which has previously been outlawed for years after DOI found that was how contraband was getting into the jails.

**JUL 10** Inmate Elijah Muhammad **dies** of a suspected fentanyl overdose. Two other inmates were taken to a hospital after getting sick from the same drugs.

**JUL 10** Mayor Adams once again renewed an executive order that allows DOC to avoid implementing RMAS. In the meantime, DOC is continuing to place people in solitary confinement without appropriate public reporting or oversight.

## AUGUST

**AUG 15** Ricardo Cruciani **dies** by suicide. The DOC was directed by a judge to place Ricardo in protective custody and under suicide watch, however this was not complied with, and instead he was placed in understaffed Eric M. Taylor Center with the general population.

**AUG 25** Michael Nieves **slit his throat** with a razor that officers gave him on Rikers Island. Instead of saving him, 3 Officers watched him for 10 minutes as he bled out. He was transferred to hospital and put on life support, but was pronounced brain dead.

**AUG 29** NYC Comptroller Brad Lander, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, and Councilmember Carlina Rivera conduct a surprise visit to the island. DOC leaders led them on a sanitized visit and, when asked about recent suicides on the Island, deliberately hid the Nieves incident from them, causing PA Williams to incorrectly remark that Rikers conditions had "improved."

## SEPTEMBER

**SEP 12** 5 elected officials conducted an unannounced visit to Rikers, where they had to wait almost an hour and a half until they received a tour. They made it clear that conditions had NOT improved across the island.

**SEP 13** The Board of Correction holds a public meeting with the Department of Correction. The DOC verbally confirms that they will stop using shower stalls to hold detainees.

**SEP 13** Molina fails to attend the Board Of Correction hearing without prior notice. The hearing has to proceed without him.

**SEP 13** The Board of Correction issues a report which finds staff lapses of various types contributed to 10 of the 16 deaths in the jails in 2021.

**SEP 14** Kevin Bryan becomes the 14th person to **die** on Rikers in 2022. Kevin hung himself in a locked staff bathroom after he was jumped by other detainees.

**SEP 20** Gregory Acevedo taken off life support, becomes the 15th person to **die**. Acevedo climbed the towering fence on the roof of the city's floating jail barge, over barbed wire and jumped into the East River. How did the DOC allow this?

**SEP 22** Elmore Robert Pondezter taken off life support, becomes the 15th person to **die**. wo days after Acevedo was taken off life support, Pondezter was intentionally granted "compassionate release" from detention, so that the DOC did not have to count his death as having occurred in their custody. This highlights the lengths to which Molina was willing to go to keep the death figures down—he specifically told his senior staff to ensure that a dying man was "off the Department's count."

**SEP 28** The media obtained images of detainees locked in caged showers, left in soiled pants, and decrepit conditions (including detainees carrying unconscious bodies) in a shocking presentation convened by the Manhattan DA.

## OCTOBER

**OCT 8** The Island is hit by a weekend wave of stabbings and slashing.

**OCT 14** DOC withdraws an unprecedented request to allow detainees to be locked in their cells for 17 hours a day, violating due process, the HALT act, RMAS, and basic human rights. The withdrawal occurred only after extreme backlash.

**OCT 17** Report is released with New York Focus that Rikers Staff tampered with records hiding intake rule violations, repeatedly altering records to extend the clock on a 24-hour time limit for holding people in intake cells.

**OCT 17** It is discovered by Reporter Matt Katz that fewer than 1 in 5 NYC correction officers took mandated suicide prevention course, despite suicide rates on the Island reaching historic highs.

**OCT 18** The entire DOC doesn't show up to the planned Board of Correction hearing in an unprecedented move, following Molina not showing up the previous month. Instead, dozens of COBA Union members make public comments against the banning of disciplinary segregation.

**OCT 22** Erick Tavira **dies** by suicide. 28-year-old Tavira was being housed in the mental health unit at the George R. Verno Center (GRVC). This death surpassed the death count of 16 in 2021.

**OCT 24** NY City Council announced an emergency hearing on the massive drug surge and ongoing overdose crisis on Rikers Island the following day.

**OCT 25** Heat & hot water didn't operate properly at 2 Rikers jails for over 48 hours (George R. Verno Center and Rose M. Singer, women's jail).

**OCT 27** Citing fentanyl-soaked children's drawings, love letters, prayer schedules, and T-shirts, NYC calls to ban detained people from getting letters in the mail.

**OCT 28** Federal Monitor Steve Martin releases a report detailing worsening dangerous and violent conditions on the island, but confusingly praises Molina.

**OCT 31** A Corrections Officer was stabbed at least 15 times by an inmate, the same day Gilberto Garcia died. COBA releases a statement calling to pull the Bill to end punitive segregation and praises Commissioner Molina and Mayor Adams.

**OCT 31** Gregory Acevedo taken off life support, becomes the 15th person to **die**. Acevedo climbed the towering fence on the roof of the city's floating jail barge, over barbed wire + jumped into the East River. How did the DOC allow this?

## NOVEMBER

**NOV 2** Former Rikers Correction Officer sentenced to more than two years in prison for taking bribes to smuggle contraband to inmates. The officer lied to the court by claiming to have cancer and undergoing chemotherapy. He even submitted a forged note from a Doctor.