

Justice Involved Supportive Housing (JISH)

May 2024

What is Justice Involved Supportive Housing?

Justice Involved Supportive Housing (JISH) combines affordable housing with tenant-centered supportive services to help people who face complex health challenges get and stay housed. It's [specifically designed](#) for individuals leaving Rikers who are at risk of homelessness and in need of behavioral health support. It aims to keep them stably housed and prevent further use of jails, shelter, or other emergency services.

Why is JISH needed in New York City?

Approximately 51% of the population at Rikers, over 2,500 people each year, struggle with untreated or complex behavioral health conditions. Incarcerating these individuals [costs approximately \\$1.4 billion](#) annually. Without housing or support to address their health, many individuals leaving Rikers will become homeless or will be re-arrested and return to jail. By comparison, supportive housing for these individuals would cost [\\$108 million annually](#), saving the City significant money while also stopping the homelessness to jail cycle, decarcerating Rikers, and reducing the significant racial disparities in the City's criminal legal and homeless systems.

Critical Gaps in Funding

In 2019, the City promised to fund 500 JISH units, but current funding levels are insufficient to adequately support staffing or provide critical services for these units. Despite JISH serving some of the most complex clients in supportive housing, JISH units receive approximately \$17,000 less per unit compared to similar supportive housing units across the city. Because the rate is significantly below what is required, providers cannot adequately serve the 120 units that are currently operating, nor take on additional units. This leaves 380 units out of operation that should otherwise be helping individuals leaving Rikers return to their communities.

Proposal

The JISH model is an evidence-based solution that reduces the rate of re-arrests and the utilization of shelters and public safety enforcement resources. These resources include police, courts, EMS, 911, and jails/prisons. With over 2,500 individuals each year in need of JISH, the City must increase the funding level for the JISH units.

The City can meet this need by:

- Appropriating an additional \$6.4 million to ensure all 500 JISH units are fully operational. This would bring all 500 units up to the current funding level of other supportive housing units across the City and increase rates for services and wages.
- Create a separate JISH line-item in the DOHMH budget to allow for better tracking of JISH funding.