



## 2022-2023 VOCAL-NY NYC BUDGET PLATFORM

*VOCAL-NY is dedicated to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic, drug war, mass incarceration and homelessness across New York State. VOCAL-NY's four different unions are releasing the following demands for the New York City budget for FY 2022-2023.*

### **Civil Rights Union Demands**

*Mass incarceration and criminalization are perhaps the clearest symptom of our City's failed social policies. Whether it's violence by police, the human rights failures in our jails, the deaths of people awaiting trial on Rikers, or the continued funneling of money into the NYPD, the City is creating more harm than safety. New York City must stop the use of police and jails as the only interventions available to manage these crises. Our proposed solutions include:*

- **Defund and Reallocate Funds from District Attorneys and Special Narcotics Prosecutor**
  - Cut \$227 million from District Attorneys (50% of their budgets): Case intake has fallen by 45% since 2010, yet city funding for prosecutors has risen by 31% during this same time.
  - Eliminate Special Narcotics Prosecutor: \$27 million
- **Defund and Reallocate Funds From NYPD**
  - NYPD Hiring Freeze and Headcount Reduction (\$533.1 Million)
  - Address Failure to Fire NYPD Officers and Cancel New NYPD Positions (\$102.4 Million)
  - Remove Police From Mental Health, Homeless Services and Youth "Engagement" (\$503.8 Million)
  - Eliminate Anti-Crime Units, SRG, VICE and Other Units (273.7 Million)
  - Cancel other NYPD Budget Bloat (~\$506.2 Million): PR, overtimes, surveillance and technology increases
- **Defund and Reallocate Correction Funding**
  - Immediate hiring freeze to produce \$92 million
- **Increase funding to DOI & BOC for oversight and accountability**
  - Block Mayor's 20% cut to DOI officers assigned to DOC.
  - Double number of BOC investigator positions.
- **Invest in Non-Police Peer-Led Violence Interruption Programs**
  - Hate Violence Prevention Programs
  - Crisis Management Systems/Cure Violence Programs
  - Restorative Justice Programs in Schools
  - Cancel expansion of BHEARD and instead invest in new federal 998 mental health crisis hotline



- **Redirect funds to meet community needs like supportive housing, healthcare, and programs for young people to reduce the flow of people into the jail system.**

### **Homelessness Union Demands**

*Homelessness in New York City has reached the highest levels since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Today 78,000 people are homeless in New York City, sleeping in shelters or on the streets. Our City must find ways to create permanent housing – not more bandaid solutions, like encampment sweeps, that cause more harm than good. Our proposed solutions include:*

- **Hire more caseworkers at DHS** by replacing those who quit during COVID-19. Preventing additional lay-offs is not good enough, we need new hires.
- **Fighting Housing Voucher Discrimination** by allocating X million to the Source of Income Discrimination Unit of CCHR to hire 14 attorneys, doubling the amount we had before COVID, which now has zero staff.
- **Expand access to CityFHEPs across the board** by opening the program to undocumented folks, households at risk of an eviction, and improving administrative processes to accelerate pathways to permanent housing.
- **Ending encampment sweeps** that are hazardous to the physical, mental and emotional health of people who are homeless, further traumatizing and deepening an individual's mistrust of police and agency assistance.
- **Provide access to public, taxpayer-funded bathrooms in subways & in streets.** Restricting access to public restrooms is a quality of life issue that is often used to criminalize individuals experiencing homelessness resulting in upwards to \$350 in fines

### **Positive Leaders Union Demands**

*People living with HIV/AIDS deserve a commitment from New York City to provide continuous and ongoing services so people can maintain treatment and prevent further spread of the virus. The City must include people-centered medical and treatment options and be grounded in proven evidence-based approaches. Our proposed solutions include:*

- **Ending HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) Voucher Discrimination** by funding the Source of Income Discrimination Unit of CCHR in order for people living with HIV/AIDS have access to stable and clean housing.
- **Increase pay of HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) caseworkers**, ensuring a lesser turnaround of employees and more staff development for case workers to better navigate the nuances of people living with HIV/AIDS.



## **Users Union Demands**

*Our city must accept the reality and begin to act on the fact that drug prohibition has only led to the proliferation of more deadly substances, and more organized crime. The only way we can end overdose deaths and provide people the necessary, compassionate care if they are struggling with drug use is to remove law enforcement from the equation, counter the toxic drug supply with a safe supply, and rapidly scale-up the proven public health and harm reduction infrastructure. Our proposals include:*

- **Invest \$1 Billion Towards Guaranteed Access to Care**
  - Increase the capacity of harm reduction programs (including Syringe Service Programs)
  - Expand Overdose Prevention Centers
  - Fund NYC DOHMH's methadone delivery program
  - Fund a robust infrastructure for street medicine and 'backpack' buprenorphine services
  - Increase the capacity of the Relay program
  - Increase the capacity of Health Engagement and Assessment Teams (HEAT)
- **Divest \$4 million from NYPD labs** and invest funding to DOHMH to create a robust community-based drug checking program
- **Divest \$9 million from NYPD Overdose Response Squads** and invest in DOHMH to create a peer navigator program to respond to overdoses instead of police