

## Alternatives to Incarceration

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The Queens Community Justice Center, a program of the Center for Court Innovation, takes a holistic approach to prevent negative consequences that often accompany contact with the legal system. The Justice Center provides community-based options, such as social services to address underlying issues, to participants charged with low-level offenses mandated by the court. By providing alternatives to fines and jail time, the Justice Center seeks to reduce the use of incarceration and help participants avoid criminal convictions and future justice system involvement.

### Clinical Services

- **Individual Counseling Sessions and Comprehensive Case Management:** Individual counseling sessions and comprehensive case management services address underlying issues, including substance use disorder, mental illness, homelessness, and trauma. Clinicians and case managers develop an individualized treatment plan and goals tailored to participants' needs. Using strengths-based and trauma-informed approaches, counseling sessions focus on therapeutic needs. Linkages to longer-term services are available. Comprehensive case management sessions focus primarily on concrete needs such as housing, employment, and access to benefits while also providing referrals to community-based providers for additional resources and services.
- **Treatment Readiness:** The Queens Community Justice Center's treatment readiness workshop helps participants explore their attitudes about substance use treatment and learn about treatment options available. Facilitators review the stages of change and use Motivational Interviewing techniques to help participants gain a better understanding of their own relationship to illicit substances as well as explore and their feelings about treatment. Facilitators connect participants who are interested in pursuing next steps with treatment providers.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Conflict resolution group uses a strengths-based approach to help participants manage conflict. The group helps participants identify their triggers and engages them in activities that promote creative expression (i.e. describing and acting out emotions) and dialogue (i.e. identifying alternatives to addressing conflict). A key goal of the group is to help participants develop strategies and coping mechanisms to better handle conflict.
- **Driver Accountability Program:** The Driver Accountability Program helps adult participants create an action plan to address the causes of their risky driving behaviors and replace them with safer driving behaviors. Drawing on participants' own experiences as drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians, the group uses surveys, video, interactive maps, and discussion to encourage critical and

consequential thinking about their impact on the road.

- **Theft Accountability Program:** Designed for participants charged with petit larceny, the Theft Accountability Program helps participants explore the thoughts, attitudes, and emotions that come up when an individual may be tempted to steal. The group also explores the social, economic, legal, and emotional consequences of theft.

### **Workforce Development**

The Queens Community Justice Center operates various workforce development initiatives for both youth and adults. The group helps justice-involved adults prepare for their employment search with workshops on resume writing, public speaking, and networking. Participants have the opportunity to engage in mock interviews and receive constructive feedback. Young adults, between the ages of 16-29, may also have the opportunity to enroll in longer term workforce development program at the Justice Center.

### **Remote Community Service**

The Queens Community Justice Center's community service curriculum is based on best practices developed and implemented by the Center for Court Innovation, based on its decades of experience implementing projects across New York City. The Justice Center offers meaningful remote community service projects that can include listening to podcasts and taking part in facilitated group discussions about the criminal justice system and mass incarceration, and helping community-based organizations meet the needs of isolated and vulnerable community members.

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### **For More Information**

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