

Alternatives-to-Incarceration Program

The Alternative to Incarceration (ATI) Program at **Brooklyn Justice Initiatives (BJI)** provides court-mandated, community-based services as an alternative to incarceration. Participants engage in structured programming and receive individualized support focused on accountability, stability, and addressing underlying needs.

Ineligible Categories

The following categories are not eligible for participation:

- **Non-ATI** or voluntary participants (mandated services **must** lead to the resolution and disposition of case)
- Summons cases (BJI ATI **only** accepts docketed/jailbound cases)
- Post-plea cases requiring full clinical assessments (assessment **must** be completed pre-plea)
- Brooklyn Justice Initiatives' ATI program is **unable to accept referrals for cases that involve Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)**

Submitting a Referral

Referrals can be submitted in three ways:

- **Digital Form:** Use QR code below or in courtrooms
- **Email:** Send your referral to BJI_ATI@nycourts.gov
- **In-person:** Speak with Resource Coordinators in court

When to submit a referral:

- Once court parties agree on a mandate that includes BJI ATI services to *resolve the case* (the agreement can be made both on the record or off-calendar)

**SCAN TO
SUBMIT
A REFERRAL**



Policies

Language Accommodations

- Up to **5 in-house sessions** may be completed using Language Line tele-translation services. When appropriate, BJI will refer participants to an external provider and report at the next court appearance whether a successful linkage was made. If linkage was unsuccessful, court parties may determine whether additional time is warranted for BJI to continue seeking a provider or if the participant's engagement through BJI's in-house sessions satisfies the service requirement.
 - For group mandates in languages other than English, sessions will be completed via language line, but the content may be modified for the purposes of clarity for the participant.

Community Service

- Community service must be connected to another BJI service and is limited to a maximum of **5 days**.

Parenting-Focused Services

- The Brooklyn Justice Initiatives' ATI program does not offer traditional Parenting Classes in-house. When parenting-focused interventions are mandated, BJI can offer *Tools for New Thinking (TNT)* or provide individual sessions with a parenting focus. Where appropriate and possible, participants may also be referred to external providers.

Overview of ATI Services

All services are free and do not require insurance. BJI offers both in-person and virtual options. **All groups/workshops are 60-90 minutes.** BJI is also available daily for in-person intakes and all services if preferred by participants.

Please note that many services are offered in cohorts or on a cyclical basis and may not be available at all times. When possible, please keep referrals open (e.g., “3 BJI sessions”) for staff to use intake information to connect participants to programming that best fits their needs.

Clinical Services and Group Offerings

- **Case Management/Individual Counseling Sessions:** Participants will meet with a clinician or case manager to address social service and therapeutic needs. BJI also may refer participants to an outside agency for completion of longer-term services.
- **Full Clinical Assessment (FCA):** A Full Clinical Assessment is a pre-plea, comprehensive evaluation conducted by a licensed social worker to develop individualized treatment recommendations for the court. An FCA may be appropriate in cases involving mental health or substance use concerns, prior treatment history, complex psychosocial needs, multiple open cases, or repeated arrests within a short period of time.
- **The Driver Accountability Program (DAP):** The Driver Accountability Program engages adult participants in examining their driving habits and addressing the causes of risky behaviors.
- **Drug Education Workshop:** The Drug Education Workshop creates a non-judgmental space for participants to gain an understanding of the complex nature of addiction and receive referrals to further resources and personalized counseling.
- **Goal-Setting Workshop:** This two-part workshop helps participants plan for their futures by identifying and working towards realistic short- and long-term goals.
- **Tools for New Thinking (TNT):** Cognitive Behavioral Therapy techniques to help adult participants examine harmful thought patterns and behaviors.
- **Treatment Readiness:** This group uses a Motivational Interviewing lens to help participants clarify their thoughts surrounding substance use treatment, review various treatment options, and understand where they may fall in the cycle of change.
- **Anger Management:** This two-session group aims to help participants identify the signs and symptoms of anger, develop coping skills, and manage frustrations more appropriately.
- **Employment Readiness Workshop:** This two-session workshop supports participants in building self-confidence, developing concrete employment skills, and finding specific job opportunities.

- **Brooklyn Museum:** Brooklyn Museum uses art as a force for personal transformation and social change to encourage participants to reflect on their experiences with the justice system and discuss perspectives on accountability.

Restorative Justice-Based Programming

- **Circles for Safe Streets (CSS):** In partnership with Families for Safe Streets, CSS provides a restorative justice-based response to traffic violence cases by supporting both victims and defendants while fostering accountability and behavioral change for drivers who have caused serious harm. Designed as an alternative to incarceration or as mitigation in Criminal or Supreme Court cases involving vehicular-related serious injury or fatality, the program requires pre-plea eligibility screening prior to a defendant entering a plea. CSS includes a minimum of five 90 - 120 minute preparatory sessions with a restorative justice facilitator, participation in the Driver Accountability Program, a needs screener to assess additional supports, an accountability circle session of up to four hours, completion of a written reflection shared with court parties outlining lessons learned and steps to prevent future harm, and a final debrief session with the facilitator, including voluntary referrals to additional resources.

- **Restorative Justice Programming:** Restorative processes intended for people charged with misdemeanors and lower-level felonies in instances of interpersonal harm. The responsible party (the defendant) and the harmed party (the complainant), along with supporters from their communities, engage in a facilitated conversation about the harm that occurred and the impact of that harm on all parties. Pre-plea eligibility screening is required.
- **Community Circle:** Community Circle combines restorative justice with art-making, creating an empowering space for participants to process their arrest experience, cultivate accountability, and connect with their community on a deeper level.

Community Service

- In partnership with the Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Center in Manhattan, BJI provides opportunities to assist with various tasks at our other Brooklyn-based sites in Redhook or Brownsville. We will attempt to individualize mandates by connecting participants to opportunities that resonate with them and/or are within their community, when possible. No State ID is required.

ATI Service Packages

ATI Service Packages provide a clear and structured foundation for ATI interventions, while allowing court parties the flexibility to tailor mandates based on case-specific factors, participant needs, and legal leverage. Designed to promote greater clarity and consistency in mandate discussions with court parties, these packages help ensure services are accessible and aligned with participant needs. BJI also offers standalone services that may be mandated independently (e.g., Tools for New Thinking).

Conflict Resolution Package

Appropriate charges: Assault
Total Engagement: 5 Sessions

- **Anger Management (2 Sessions):** Identifying triggers and escalation cycles; emotional regulation skills; communication strategies; de-escalation techniques.
- **Tools for New Thinking Workshop (TNT) (1 Session):** Cognitive restructuring; identifying harmful thinking patterns; practicing alternative responses; strengthening decision-making skills.
- **Individual Sessions (2 Sessions):** Expanding on concepts introduced in group sessions and applying them to real-life situations; revisiting needs identified during intake and addressing needs that have emerged since; providing resource linkage and/or brief counseling support as appropriate.

Substance Use Package

Appropriate Charges: Substance Use
Total Engagement: 5 Sessions

- **Drug/Alcohol Education Group (1 Session):** Psychoeducation on substance use impact; risk factors and triggers; harm reduction strategies; brain-behavior connection.
- **Treatment Readiness Group (1 Session):** Assessing readiness for change; exploring ambivalence; identifying motivation and personal goals; preparing for treatment engagement if appropriate.
- **Individual Sessions (3 Sessions):** Application of group content to daily life and risk scenarios; motivational interviewing and behavioral change support; addressing needs identified during intake and needs that have emerged since; providing resource linkage and/or brief counseling support as appropriate.

Community Service Package

Total Engagement: Up to 6 Sessions

- **Community Service Placement (5 Days Max):** Structured and supervised community service engagement; monitoring and documentation of completion.
- **Individual Session (1 Session):** Reflection on community service experience; discussion of learning outcomes; addressing needs identified during intake or that have emerged since; resource linkage and/or brief counseling support as appropriate.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To make a referral, please fill out the [Brooklyn Justice Initiatives ATI Referral Form](#).

Email: BJI_ATI@nycourts.gov

Phone: 347.703.6853

Sample Mandate Language

- **Conflict Resolution Package:**
Conflict Resolution Package
+ number of BJI Sessions
- **Substance Use Package:**
Substance Use Package
+ number of BJI Sessions
- **Community Service Package:**
Community Service Package
+ number of BJI Sessions

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