



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
Joseph Ponte, Commissioner

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September 8, 2015

Stanley Brezenoff, Chair
NYC Board of Correction
51 Chambers Street, Room 923
New York, NY 10007

Re: Variance Request to BOC Minimum Standards Regarding Implementation of the Young Adult Plan: Section 1-02

Dear Mr. Brezenoff:

Pursuant to §1-15(b)(1)(i) of the New York City Board of Correction’s (“Board”) minimum standards, the New York City Department of Correction (“Department”) requests a limited variance from the BOC Minimum Standards §1-02(2)(c), which requires that “no later than October 15, 2015...inmates ages 18 to 21 be housed separately and apart from inmates over the age of 21” until December 31, 2015, for the purpose of implementing the newly created Young Adult Strategy plan.

The Department is committed to providing the young adults (18 to 21 year olds) in our custody with programming and services that address the unique needs of this population. This move away from a traditional correctional model to one that incentivizes positive behavior with heightened programming and staffing is unprecedented. In order to effectively institute this plan, it is critical that the Department have the time needed to establish specialized housing in combination with appropriate programming and staff training. As extensively discussed in the Department’s Young Adult Strategy plan, which was recently submitted to the Board, proper implementation of the plan requires thoughtful assessment of housing allocations best suited for young adults. This assessment must incorporate classification, tailored programming to suit their educational and behavioral needs, and mandated staffing ratios and training. The success of this plan is dependent on the Department’s ability to lay a solid foundation to build upon moving forward. Completion of the requisite components of the plan cannot be achieved by October 15, 2015, so the Department is unable to fully comply with the minimum standards by that date. Therefore, the Department is seeking an extension of this deadline to December 31, 2015.

The Department appreciates the Board’s consideration of these matters. We look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that the inmates in the Department’s custody are provided with the best care possible.

Sincerely,

Joseph Ponte