

Brooklyn ^(BDS) Defenders

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*****For Immediate Release*****

Brooklyn Defender Services' Statement on Sonia Reyes

(BROOKLYN, NY) – Brooklyn Defender Services released the following statement following reports of the death of our client Sonia Reyes, who died at Rikers Island today:

“We are devastated by the loss of Sonia Reyes, who died early Thursday after being incarcerated at Rikers Island for less than a month. We express our sincere condolences to her loved ones and all who are affected by her passing.

Sadly, Ms. Reyes is the fourth person to lose their life at Rikers in just the past month. Her death comes as the NYC jail population surpasses 7,000 people, the highest total in six years. Despite the NYC Department of Corrections’ continued failure to protect the health and safety of people incarcerated in its jails, judges and prosecutors continue to send more and more people to Rikers.

As conditions continue to deteriorate, it is imperative that all options must be considered to avoid people’s incarceration at Rikers. All efforts to reduce the jail population must be explored to avoid preventable tragedies like this. Too many lives are at stake.”

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Brooklyn Defender Services is a public defense office whose mission is to provide outstanding representation and advocacy free of cost to people facing loss of freedom, family separation and other serious legal harms by the government. We believe in a client-centered approach and work, in and out of court, to uphold the rights, freedom and dignity of people threatened by unjust, racist and harmful legal systems.