Adams Administration Unfit to Lead Rikers: A Timeline

100 days in office and every action Adams takes, conditions only worsen

This is a log of all the Rikers related actions that Mayor Eric Adams and Commissioner Molina have made since entering office.

**JANUARY**

**JAN 1** Department of Corrections Commissioner Louis A. Molina reverses new sick leave policy, allowing staff to call out sick without providing medical documentation from Mount Sinai doctors. This makes it easier for staff to abuse sick leave. He also stopped suspending CO’s for AWOL and sick leave abuse.

**JAN 3** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**JAN 4** Molina issues secret memo loosening Captains’ requirements, lessening facility tours and ridding the mandate to check that cells are properly locked. The memo is rescinded when the Federal Monitor finds out.

**JAN 7** Detainees go on a week-long hunger strike due to jail conditions.

**JAN 8** City Plan” to avoid receivership. The plan is inadequate, recycled, and unworkable. Molina calls the plan “sufficient.”

**JAN 9** Molina secretly issues internal memo loosening escort staff’s duties in July 2021, when the “staffing crisis” began, meaning 2250 are still not showing up to work.

**JAN 10** Molina issues memo that could result in less staff going on sick leave.

**JAN 11** Detainees are not getting proper medical care at DOC facilities.

**JAN 14** Molina’s refusal to communicate with the Monitor – Molina’s refusal to communicate with the Monitor and Nunez plaintiffs; meeting was meant to discuss any improvements made since Monitor’s scathing Special Report.

**JAN 15** Molina misses scheduled meeting with Federal Monitor and Nunez plaintiffs; meeting was meant to discuss any improvements made since Monitor’s scathing Special Report.

**JAN 16** Molina, Councilman Espinal, and two other staff from the Department of Corrections enter Rikers Island without permission.

**JAN 17** Detainee George Pagan dies at the Eric M. Taylor Center (EMTC); no uniform staff were on post to assist.

**JAN 19** Voltage drops due to staff shortages.

**JAN 20** Missed medical appointments at DOC facilities.

**JAN 22** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**JAN 24** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**JAN 27** Molina refuses to share any information with oversight agencies, including the Federal Monitor and City Council, and does not provide a reason why during the City Council Meeting.

**JAN 28** Molina fires Ray Spinella, who was hired specifically to assist with staffing concerns.

**FEBRUARY**

**FEB 16** Molina fires Ray Spinella, who was hired specifically to assist with staffing concerns.

**FEB 17** Molina fires Ray Spinella, who was hired specifically to assist with staffing concerns.

**FEB 20** Molina fires Ray Spinella, who was hired specifically to assist with staffing concerns.

**FEB 27** Molina fires Ray Spinella, who was hired specifically to assist with staffing concerns.

**MAR 17** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**MAR 19** Molina secretly issues internal memo loosening Captains’ requirements, lessening facility tours and ridding the mandate to check that cells are properly locked. The memo is rescinded when the Federal Monitor finds out.

**MAR 21** Molina secretly issues internal memo loosening Captains’ requirements, lessening facility tours and ridding the mandate to check that cells are properly locked. The memo is rescinded when the Federal Monitor finds out.

**MAR 26** Molina issues memo that could result in less staff going on sick leave.

**MAR 27** Molina issues memo that could result in less staff going on sick leave.

**MAR 29** Molina issues memo that could result in less staff going on sick leave.

**MAR 30** Molina issues memo that could result in less staff going on sick leave.

**MAR 31** Molina issues memo that could result in less staff going on sick leave.

**APRIL**

**APR 1** Molina appoints Assistant Deputy Warden Wayne Prince, who is under DOC investigation for stealing time, to oversee sick leave investigations.

**APR 5** Molina misses scheduled meeting with Federal Monitor and Nunez plaintiffs; meeting was meant to discuss any improvements made since Monitor’s scathing Special Report.

**APR 8** Giant machete found in the Otis Bantum Correctional Center (OBCC); due to size, must have been brought in by DOC staff.

**APR 11** Molina skips second status meeting with Federal Monitor and Nunez plaintiffs; meeting was meant to discuss any improvements made since Monitor’s scathing Special Report.

**APR 14** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**APR 16** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**APR 22** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**APR 26** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**APR 28** Molina fires Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Sarena Townsend, head of internal affairs and staff discipline, after she refused to dismiss 2,000 disciplinary cases in 100 days’ time. In violation of a Federal Court Order, Molina does so without consulting first with the Federal Monitor.

**MAY**

**MAY 1** Molina announces interagency Task Force to address the crisis on Rikers, with no additional information or metrics for improvements.

**MAY 5** Mayor Adams briefly visits Rikers Island for the first time since becoming Mayor; does not tour, does not speak with detainees; merely congratulates staff.

**MAY 7** Detainee Dashawn Carter dies at Anna M. Kross Center, by hanging himself, 2 days after arriving on Rikers.

**MAY 9** 22 Eric M. Taylor Center (EMTC) posts go unmanned.

**MAY 10** DOC members testify that conditions at the North Infirmary Command on Rikers Island violate the HALT Act and is the functioning equivalent of solitary confinement: “it struck me as a cage.”

**MAY 17** New York Supreme Court Order finds Dept. of Correction in contempt of court, ordering them to pay approximately $180,000 to plaintiffs if they don’t begin providing basic access to care within 30 days.

**MAY 18** The Monitoring team publically introduces a “City Plan” to avoid receivership. The plan is inadequate, recycled, and unworkable.

**MAY 19** Female Detainee Mary Yehudah dies of an overdose after being transferred from Rose M. Singer Center to Elmhurst Hospital Center. Commissioner Molina had reversed Previous DOC Commissioner Schiraldi’s decision to move female inmates out of Rikers. Had he not, Yehudah would never have been on Rikers.

**MAY 20** 20-year-old Emanuel Sullivan becomes the 6th person to die on Rikers Island in 2022. The young man was found dead in his bed at Robert N. Davoren Center.

Last updated 11/4/22

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**JUNE**

**JUN 18** Antonio Bradley dies by suicide. Bradley was left for 6-9 minutes before anyone assisted. DOC compassionately released a brain-dead Mr. Bradley so that when he officially died, DOC would not have to report it; DOC did not report his death, although they were aware he died, which delayed and tarnished the Attorney General and DOI investigations.

**JUN 20** Anibal Carrasquillo dies by overdose. Days before his OD, Carrasquillo was detained at OBCC. Upon closing OBCC, he was moved to 6RVC, where drugs and violence are rampant. His death was a result of insufficient tours, understaffed posts, and the closure of OBCC.

**JUN 21** Albert Drye dies, the third death in less than a week and ninth to pass in 2022.

**JUN 22** Mayor Adams visits Rikers only for 30 minutes. He defends Correction Officers, saying “I am not ashamed of you I am proud of you. Keep doing the job you are doing.”

**JUN 28** Brendan McGuire, Mayor Adams’ Chief Counsel, stated in a city council hearing that because his Task Force falls under NYC Law Dept, Attorney Client privilege limits what the Department of Correction can share, further blunting transparency in the department.

**AUGUST**

**AUG 15** Ricardo Cruciani dies by suicide. The DOC was directed by a judge to place Ricardo in protective custody and under suicide watch, however this was not complied with, and instead he was placed in understaffed Eric M. Taylor Center with the general population.

**AUG 25** Michael Nieves slit his throat with a razor that officers gave him on Rikers Island. Instead of saving him, 3 Officers watched him for 10 minutes as he bled out. He was transferred to hospital and put on life support, but was pronounced brain dead.

**AUG 29** NYC Comptroller Brad Lander, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, and Councilmember Carlina Rivera conduct a surprise visit to the island. DOC leaders led them on a sanitized visit and, when asked about recent suicides on the Island, deliberately hid the Nieves incident from them, causing PA Williams to incorrectly remark that Rikers conditions had “improved.”

**SEPTEMBER**

**SEP 12** 5 elected officials conducted an unannounced visit to Rikers, where they had to wait almost an hour and a half until they received a tour. They made it clear that conditions had NOT improved across the Island.

**SEP 13** The Board of Correction holds a public meeting with the Department of Correction. The DOC verbally confirms that they will stop using shower stalls to hold detainees.

**SEP 13** Molina fails to attend the Board Of Correction hearing without prior notice. The hearing has to proceed without him.

**SEP 13** The Board of Correction issues a report which finds stall lapses of various types contributed to 10 of the 16 deaths in the jails in 2021.

**SEP 14** Kevin Bryan becomes the 14th person to die on Rikers in 2022. Kevin hung himself in a locked staff bathroom after he was jumped by other detainees.

**SEP 22** Elmore Robert Pondezter taken off life support, becomes the 15th person to die, 30 days after Acevedo was taken off life support. Pondezter was intentionally granted “compassionate release” from detention, so that the DOC did not have to count his death as having occurred in their custody. This highlights the lengths to which Molina was willing to go to keep the death figures down—he specifically told his senior staff to ensure that a dying man was “off the Department’s count.”

**SEP 29** The media obtained images of detainees locked in caged showers, left in soiled pants, and decetip conditions (including detainees carrying unconscious bodies) in a shocking presentation convened by the Manhattan DA.

**OCTOBER**

**OCT 8** The Island is hit by a weekend wave of stabblings and slashing.

**OCT 14** DOC withdraws an unprecedented request to allow detainees to be locked in their cells for 17 hours a day, violating due process, the HALT act, RMAS, and basic human rights. The withdrawal occurred only after extreme backlash.

**OCT 17** Report is released with New York Focus that Rikers Staff tampered with records hiding intake rule violations, repeatedly altering records to extend the clock on a 24-hour time limit for holding people in intake cells.

**OCT 17** It is discovered by Reporter Matt Katz that fewer than 1 in 5 NYC correction officers took mandated suicide prevention course, despite suicide rates on the Island reaching historic highs.

**OCT 18** The entire DOC doesn’t show up to the planned Board of Correction hearing in an unprecedented move, following Molina not showing up the previous month. Instead, dozens of COBA Union members make public comments against the banning of disciplinary segregation.

**OCT 22** Erick Tavira dies by suicide. 28-year-old Tavira was being housed in the mental health unit at the George R. Vierno Center (GRVC). This death surpassed the death count of 16 in 2021.

**OCT 26** NY City Council announced an emergency hearing on the massive drug surge and ongoing overdose crisis on Rikers Island the following day.

**NOVEMBER**

**NOV 2** Former Rikers Correction Officer sentenced to more than two years in prison for taking bribes to smuggle contraband to inmates. The officer lied to the court by claiming to have cancer and undergoing chemotherapy. He even submitted a forged note from a Doctor.

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