



My name is Natasha Lifton, I am the Managing Director of External Affairs at Trinity Church. Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments related to proposed changes to the IDNYC program.

Trinity Church is an Episcopal Church in Lower Manhattan with a congregation of more than 1,800 parishioners, who come from all five boroughs and form an ethnically, racially, and economically diverse congregation. In addition to our ministry, we carry out our mission of faith and social justice through direct services, grantmaking, and advocacy.

First, we want to acknowledge and thank the Human Resources Administration (HRA) for its ongoing efforts to expand IDNYC access. The recent decision to add 23 different types of documents that can be used to establish identity and residency is an important step forward. Expanding eligibility makes IDNYC more accessible to New Yorkers who may not have had the necessary paperwork before. This kind of progress is exactly what we need to ensure that all New Yorkers can obtain valid identification and access critical services.

However, one major gap remains: incarcerated individuals leaving Rikers Island need to have an ID in hand when they walk out the door. Right now, too many people are released without any form of official identification, which creates an immediate and unnecessary barrier to reentry. Without an ID, it's nearly impossible to apply for a job, secure housing, or access essential healthcare and other benefits.

We strongly urge HRA to prioritize ensuring that every individual leaving Rikers has an IDNYC card. To make this happen, HRA should work closely with the Department of Correction (DOC) to establish a streamlined process where individuals can apply for and receive their IDNYC cards before they are released. This is not just a bureaucratic fix- it's a common-sense solution that will give people real opportunity to rebuild their lives.

Many individuals entering Rikers have never had an official ID, while others lose theirs during arrest and processing. Some are released without the ID they were originally arrested with, and for those who experience housing instability, proving residency becomes an even greater challenge. These systemic gaps can keep people trapped in cycles of instability and recidivism.

Thank you for your time and for your continued efforts to expand access to IDNYC. We look forward to working together to ensure that every New Yorker, no matter their circumstances, has the identification they need to move forward.