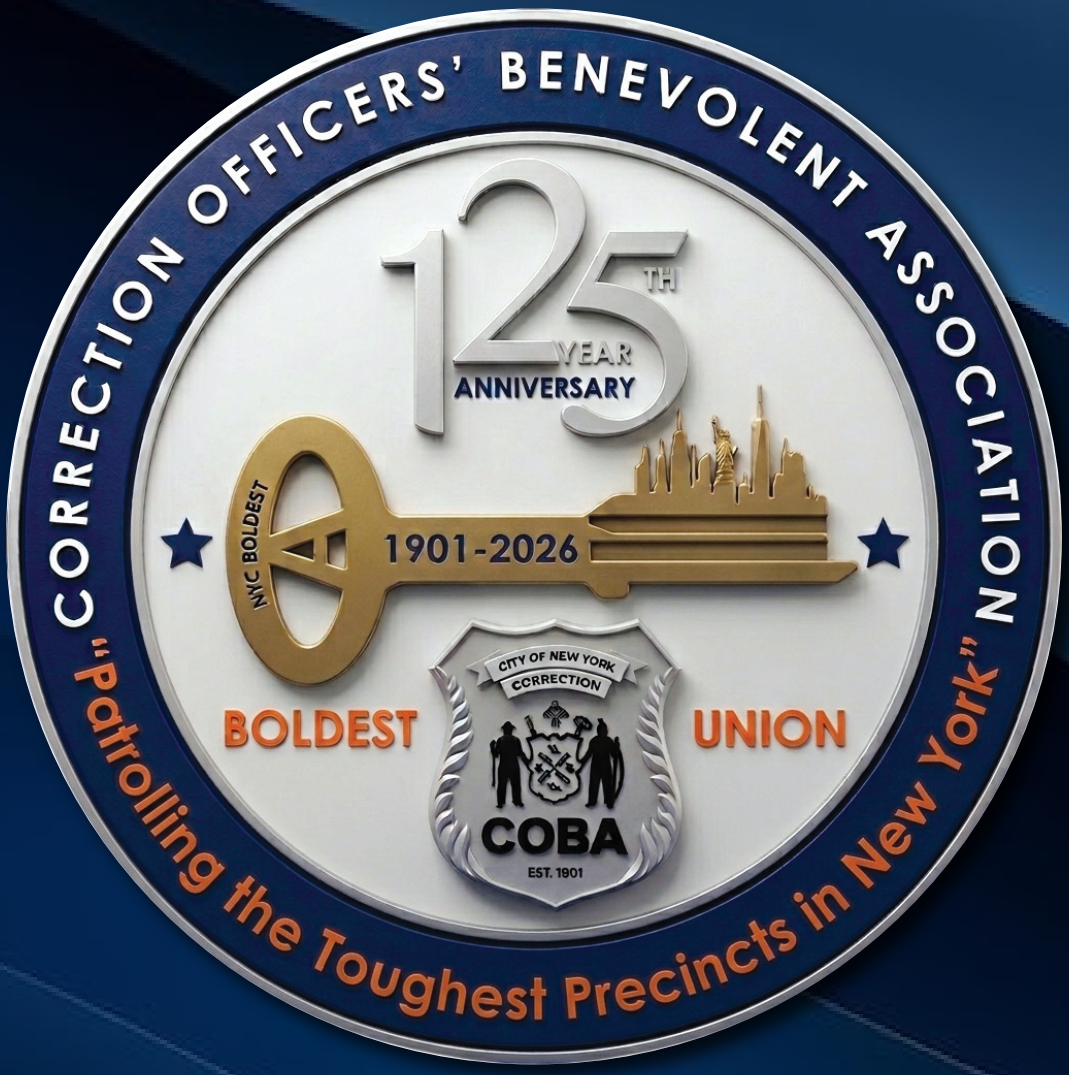
MARCH 2026

BOLDEST NEWS



COBA PROUDLY CELEBRATES OUR 125TH ANNIVERSARY REPRESENTING THE BEST CORRECTION OFFICERS IN THE WORLD!

1901-2026

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THE BOLDEST UNION

CORRECTION OFFICERS' BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION, INC.
"PATROLLING THE TOUGHEST PRECINCTS IN NEW YORK"

COBA HEADQUARTERS
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MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT
Benny Boscio Jr.

CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR UNION

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Dear Brother & Sister Officers,

I hope you and your loved ones enjoyed a safe and happy holiday season. As we enter a new year, we also embark on a new chapter in our union's history, celebrating the 125th anniversary of our union, which was formed in 1901. Back then, COBA, as a benevolent association, was primarily created to provide burial arrangements for victims of the flu epidemic.

125 years later, COBA won collective bargaining rights, negotiated contracts, pensions, benefits and established parity with other uniformed unions which had gained these privileges well before us. The union that you belong to now took literally over a hundred years to develop. Your collective bargaining rights, your healthcare, your pensions, your job protections didn't just happen overnight, nor were they ever guaranteed.

In fact, every COBA Executive Board dating back to our early beginnings, had to fight vigorously to secure these important benefits, which you and your families are immediately entitled to the moment you join COBA. Not only did our union have to fight tooth and nail to earn these rights and benefits, we also had to fight against many political forces that attempted to diminish our rights.

I reference our history, which is explained in further detail in this edition of COBA News, because in order to understand where we are headed, it's important to learn where we came from. There's an expression that states, "what's past is prologue." This means that history isn't just a record of what happened; it's the introduction or setup for what's happening now and what will happen next, suggesting the past directly influences and prepares us for the future, often through repeating patterns or lessons we can learn from.

This could not be more true as we enter 2026 and face a political sea change in the City of New York's political landscape. For the past four years, we have enjoyed a strong and productive relationship with City Hall, specifically with Mayor Adams

and his Deputy Mayors for Public Safety, who came to our aid when the Department of Correction and the City Council attempted to violate our employment rights and jeopardize our safety. That dynamic no longer exists.

The new Mayoral Administration, as you know, shares a very different political philosophy, particularly when it comes to criminal justice and public safety.

I have often said that I will sit down and meet with anyone regardless of their political views or their party affiliations, in order to advocate for the rights of all our members and advance our collective interests. I will continue that approach with the new administration.

That being said, the Executive Board and I will use every resource at our disposal to push back on any attempt to roll back the rights and benefits that took our union 125 years to achieve.

Elected officials in Albany and the City of New York know what to expect if we are under attack and we are fully prepared to remind them if need be. The emergence of COBA as a powerful political force in New York did not happen solely as a result of COBA's leadership throughout the years. It happened because time and time again, no matter what our union faced in the past, our members stood strong and united, lifting us up and collectively moving this union forward.

I ask each of you to stand together and maintain that same unity and solidarity that past generations of correction officers exemplified.

We will need to draw upon that strength in the weeks and months ahead, now more than ever. May God continue to bless each of you and your families. Stay safe and continue to have each other's backs.

In Solidarity,

Benny Boscio Jr.
President

CORRECTION OFFICERS' BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION, INC.

"PATROLLING THE TOUGHEST PRECINCTS IN NEW YORK"

Established in 1901

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Our History

1901-2026

How COBA Became A Rising Political Force in New York City and Beyond

COBA was established in 1901 following the tradition of the police and firemen's "benevolent associations," built in the previous decade to provide burial services for victims of the 1890's influenza epidemic. When the epidemic passed, these associations remained as interest groups of uniformed city workers who were eager to make political connections to negotiate for pay, benefits, and working conditions.

Municipal unions were not formally recognized as collective bargaining agents in New York City until 1954, and it wasn't until 1958 that the first city contract was settled.

In the decades prior to recognition, city unions existed, but they did not have the power to bargain collectively or to represent entire sectors exclusively and had to seek other means to represent their members, such as lobbying politicians behind closed doors, while working closely with the heads of the departments they represented.

This collaborative spirit defined the early days of COBA's political life. In **1937**, COBA achieved the DOC's first mandatory yearly raises and pension through lobbying Alderman William McCarthy, who legislated the raises into city law, while also expanding pension benefits for Correction Officers.

Similarly, in **1939**, COBA partnered with City Councilman Charles Keegan to offer up a bill restructuring the officers' tours of duty, eliminating permanent night shifts and instituting an eight-hour day.

The political role of COBA in these campaigns was backroom lobbying and messaging, with a relatively positive message at that: the former bill, COBA argued, would equalize the ranks of the DOC, eliminating jealousies and favoritism arising from competition over day shifts, allow the officers formerly relegated permanent night-shifts to see their families, and generally contribute to the efficient management of the jail facilities.

Both measures passed, though the tour system was routinely violated by the DOC and remained a source of contention.

COBA followed these measures by finding sponsorship for another important bill, this time Councilman Anthony DiGiovanni, establishing NYC Correction Officers as a uniformed force, with a formalized system structuring promotion, to counter nepotism and build a workforce of career officers.

Emboldened by these and other lobbying victories, COBA set its sights on pay parity with the far more politically powerful police and firefighters, as well as on expanding its membership.

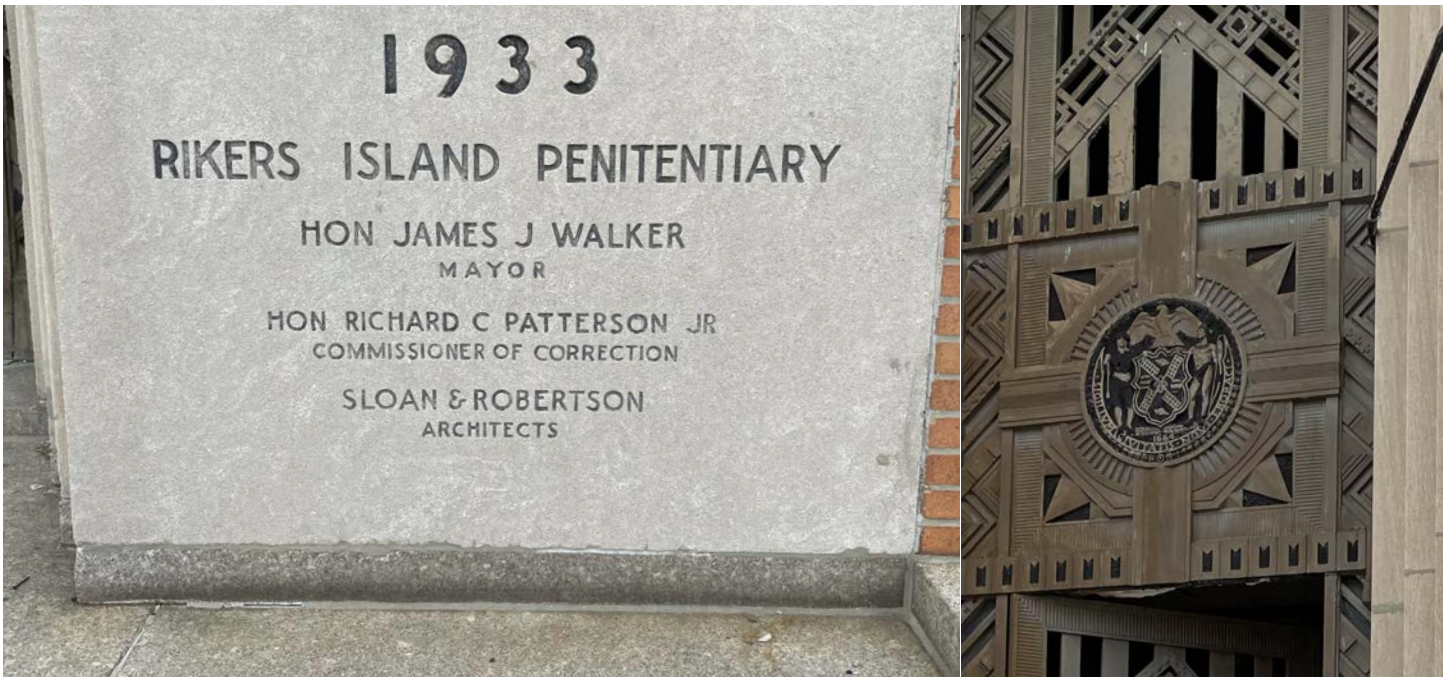
Pay parity proved to be a major challenge, however, and coupled with COBA's demand for more uniformed staff as the city's jail population rose, the union found itself in conflict with the City Council and the mayor on these issues throughout the **1940's** and **1950's**.

At the same time, municipal unions were increasing their size and power in New York City, encouraging internal membership participation and creating independence from their civilian bosses, while union leaders replaced dependence on elected officials by becoming elected officials themselves.

By the early **1950's**, backed by a loyal and increasingly mobilized membership, COBA President Stephen Hartigan was openly challenging the mayor and City Council in the court of public opinion. However, when Hartigan addressed COBA members on the need for pay parity, he called for more legislation and "a decent Labor Relations Board where matters like this can be brought swiftly and honestly to the proper authority."

Fueled by the tax revenue of the post-war economic boom and the federal dollars of President Johnson's Great Society program, the NYC public sector grew in the **1960's**, and a powerful municipal unionism emerged. This also held doubly for law-enforcement unions, as the 1960's saw the rise of "law and order" ideology and policy. President Leo Zeferetti led COBA and vocally opposed the Board of Correction, a civilian oversight board with few formal powers to begin with, accusing the chairman of harassment for investigating correction officers. When the Board attempted to gain subpoena power to evaluate claims of abuse, Zeferetti naturally opposed the measure.

In the wake of a riot in the Tombs, COBA, with Zeferetti as its spokesman, advanced the threat of a mass quitting should they not be allowed to forcibly "clean up our institution" by fixing broken locks and "returning inmates to their cells", also using the occasion to demand riot gear and 700 new officers. This posturing was not without effect. In the wake of the Attica rebellion, Zeferetti called for stronger



penalties for rioting, including life in prison for taking hostages. And while COBA political maneuverings were not always successful, it was clear that its combination of strong political advocacy and membership engagement moved what was then a small, obscure union beyond playing second fiddle to politicians, toward becoming a powerful political force in both New York City and the State of New York.

John Martine, COBA President from **1962** to **1969**, piloted COBA to an impressive array of gains and accomplishments during his seven years at the helm. During his four administrations, Mr. Martine was able to preserve the principle of pay parity among Correction Officers, Patrolmen and Fire Fighters in the face of strong opposition.

The Correction Officer pay range, $5,600-$6,981 when he took office, had advanced by July 1, 1967 to $7,932-$9,483.

Among the other gains made under Mr. Martine's mentorship: city payments of $1 per day worked to an annuity fund for each officer; an increase in the annual uniform allowance from $110 to $170; the right to choose health insurance plans with the city paying the full cost; and guaranteed half-pay retirement after 20 years' service, based on final average salary. Mr. Martine also provided COBA with its first office and provided its members with their first COBA NEWS.

During the **1970's** and **1980's** the New York City inmate population continued to soar, and COBA continued to call for more officers.

In the **1990's** and **2000's,** under then- president Norman Seabrook, COBA's political power increased and the union invested more into its membership services. The Widows' and Children's Fund was created in **1996** followed by the COBA Scholarship Fund. Since then, the Widows' and Children's Fund has distributed over $1million to the families of our bereaved officers during the holidays, helping them purchase holiday meals and toys.

Likewise, the Scholarship Fund has awarded approximately $1 million in scholarships that provide $1,000 checks to our annual scholarship recipients, helping them with their higher educational goals.

Also, during this time, COBA successfully passed nearly forty pieces of legislation that provided Correction Officers

with new job protections. Among these pieces of legislation were the Heart Bill, the ¾ Disability Bill, The Anti-Privatization Bill and legislation that created a Variable Supplement Fund (VSF) for Correction Officers, which for decades, had only been available for police officers and firefighters.

In **2020**, COBA entered a dramatically new chapter in its union history. Unlike previous years, the entire political landscape in New York had changed completely, making New York a "one political party" state with no checks and balances. During this time, many left-wing anti-law enforcement politicians had taken over virtually every major office in the city and state. Their agenda was focused on a one-sided criminal justice reform movement calling for an end to punitive segregation in New York City's jails, the release of law enforcement officers disciplinary records, bail reform, and even the early release of inmates under our custody.

On top of this political upheaval, COBA had to contend with a world-wide COVID-19 epidemic that threatened the lives of our members and dramatically impacted the working conditions of every New York City Correction Officer.

In this uncertain and volatile climate, COBA President Benny Boscio and a new Executive Board were overwhelmingly elected to turn the page and steer Correction Officers through the storm. Then Mayor Bill de Blasio had sought to end punitive segregation in the city's jails within weeks of President Boscio taking office.

But de Blasio's plans were challenged by President Boscio in both the courts and the court of public opinion. Boscio led an aggressive public relations campaign to expose the epidemic of jail violence in the city's jails including the rampant sexual assaults on female Correction Officers.

COBA brought female officers, who had been sexually assaulted, to testify before the New York City Council and the State Legislature to tell their stories for the very first time. And for the first time ever, COBA introduced legislation in Albany that would make the sexual assaults of New York City Correction Officers a Felony instead of a Misdemeanor.

Back in New York City, Mayor de Blasio sued COBA, falsely claiming that the union

encouraged its members to call out sick and to not come to work. Once again, de Blasio failed and the court ruled in COBA's favor.

That didn't stop de Blasio from attempting to break the law himself by contacting private security companies to take over approximately 100 posts for Correction Officers protecting the perimeter of Rikers Island assigned to the Special Operations Division.

Again, COBA pushed back, publicizing the fact that the so-called pro-labor mayor was union-busting and breaking our well-established and settled Anti-Privatization law that prevents the City of New York from replacing any New York City Correction Officer with private security guards. COBA also reached out to the major private security companies and had letters sent from many other law enforcement unions, demanding the companies cease pursuing any contracts with the city.

To further protect the jobs of Correction Officers who had followed both DOC and the CDC guidelines to quarantine when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, and called out sick, COBA passed landmark legislation that was signed into law by Governor Cuomo that prevented any public employer in the State of New York, including the New York City Department of Correction, from disciplining or taking any retaliatory action on any public employee in the State of New York.

Recognizing that the political forces targeting Correction Officers and other law enforcement unions were negatively impacting the staffing levels of Correction Officers, President Boscio understood something needed to be done to incentivize people to become Correction Officers and remain on the force.

For a full three years, Mayor de Blasio refused to hire a single new Correction Officer, even as hundreds were retiring or resigning every single month.

In **2023**, COBA banded together with a dozen other uniformed unions to create the Uniform Coalition, comprised of correction officers, police unions, sanitation officers, and firefighters to name a few.

This powerful coalition led by COBA President Boscio as one of the Co-Chairs, successfully negotiated the highest wage increases for their members in over 15 years, 18.77%, compounded over a five-year term. And specific to COBA, President Boscio successfully negotiated three retention bonuses for Correction Officers for the first time ever, along with a significant contribution from the City of New York to COBA's Health and Welfare Funds that provide optical, dental and prescription drug benefits for COBA members and their families.

As evidenced by this timeline stretching back over 125 years to 1901, COBA has undoubtedly evolved into a powerful union that has transformed the role of New York City Correction Officers and brought their salaries, benefits, and employment rights to the same levels of other uniformed forces, which had those privileges for decades.

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COBA PROUDLY SALUTES OUR BOLDEST HEROES

Correction Officer Ross, West Facility

Last year, an inmate started a fire within his cell, endangering the entire West Facility. Without hesitation, Correction Officer Ross removed the inmate to an area with fresh air. Ross didn't stop there, she then initiated an evacuation and safely secured the other inmates.

Correction Officer Collymore, EMTC

Late last year, when an inmate collapsed, Correction Officer Collymore immediately called for a medical emergency and began assessing the inmate. Medical staff arrived on scene and took over when the inmate became unresponsive. After being treated by the medical staff, the inmate regained consciousness and Correction Officer Collymore helped save his life.

Correction Officer Guirand, RESH

RMSC Correction Officer Guirand was assigned to a post in RESH, when a life-or-death situation took place. Without hesitation, Correction Officer Guirand responded to the area, assisted fellow Correction Officers and subdued the aggressor.

Correction Officer Smith, RMSC/RESH mailroom

RMSC/RESH, Mailroom Correction Officer Smith's dilligence led to the seizure of several drugs from entering two different facilities, within the same day.

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COBA PROUDLY SALUTES OUR BOLDEST HEROES

Correction Officer Dente, OBCC

A violent altercation broke out between inmates involving improvised weapons at OBCC. Officers used chemical agents to subdue the individuals, who continued to resist and attempted to leave the area. During the incident, Correction Officer Dente remained calm, relied on his training, and ultimately led the effort to restore order within the facility.

Correction Officer Torres, NIC

While assisting other Correction Officers, Correction Officer Torres discovered cereal containing sugar packets and paper strips that tested positive for K2. Correction Officer Torres immediately reported the contraband, preventing a serious safety risk and potentially saving lives. This is a reminder of the vigilance and teamwork our officers demonstrate every day!

Correction Officer Saint-Phard, SOD

On his commute home, he came upon the scene of an accident and didn't hesitate - calling 911, assisting the injured, and helping manage the situation before first responders arrived. A veteran of nearly 2 decades with DOC and a member of the Special Operations Division, Correction Officer Saint-Phard continues to go above and beyond, even training to become a certified EMT.

Correction Officer Cunningham, RNDC

COBA recognizes the vigilance of Correction Officer Cunningham of RNDC, who intercepted five contraband attempts in the Visit Area over two days. Her sharp observation and proactive screening stopped several concealed items before they reached the facility.

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COBA PROUDLY SALUTES OUR BOLDEST HEROES

Correction Officer Romaine, RNDC

At RNDC, a violent altercation broke out inside a housing area when an individual became aggressive and attacked multiple officers. Despite being struck several times, Correction Officer Romaine stayed in the fight, working alongside his fellow officers to gain control of the situation and protect everyone in the area.

Correction Officer Stanislaus, SRT

While commuting to work, Correction Officer Stanislaus came upon the scene of a deadly four-car crash in Howard Beach. He immediately pulled over and jumped into action, joining fellow off-duty Correction Officer Saint-Phard, who was already on the scene helping the injured. Together, the two officers worked to assist victims and manage traffic until emergency responders arrived. Stanislaus, a Marine Corps veteran and 18-year member of the Department, didn't hesitate, he answered the call.

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COBA PROUDLY SHINES A SPOTLIGHT ON CORRECTION OFFICERS BEHIND THE SHIELD

Correction Officer Jahangir, EMTC

Behind the shield: Correction Officer Jahangir is more than one of NYC's Boldest, he's a talented artist, whose work has been featured in art forums across the city. His creativity extends far beyond the job. We're proud to spotlight the passions he pursues off duty.

Correction Officer Calixte, GRVC

Behind the shield: Correction Officer Calixte is a talented trumpet player, whose music brings power and emotion to every ceremony. As a member of the Ceremonial Unit, he uses his gift to honor tradition, service, and sacrifice.

Correction Officer Williams, NIC

Behind the shield: Correction Officer Williams brings tradition to life through song. As a proud member of the Ceremonial Unit, she lends her voice to DOC events by performing the national anthem with pride.

Correction Officer Olu-Hamilton, OBCC

Behind the shield: Correction Officer Olu-Hamilton brings more than dedication to the job. His music connects people, uplifts the community, and reminds us of the power of coming together.

MESSAGE FROM FIRST VICE PRESIDENT **Glenn Morgan**

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SECURITY UPDATE: FIXING THE BASICS & FIGHTING FOR SAFETY

As I continue my role as the Executive Board member assigned to security related concerns, my goal remains simple:

Stop ignoring the operational headaches that make this job harder than it needs to be. At the start of the year, I went straight for the "low-hanging fruit"–the apparent problems the Department has let slide for too long.

We identified four major issues affecting your daily routine. We fixed three of them, and for the fourth, I've officially taken the gloves off.

1. WE CLEARED THE BRIDGE

We all know the frustration of finishing a tour at 0531, signing out, and getting stuck on the island because the Department decided to close the bridge or limit lanes until 0600. That is unpaid time, and it violates your rights under the FLSA.

The Fix: We put the Department on notice: Keep trapping officers on the island unpaid, and we will see you in court for a class action lawsuit.

The Result: They folded. The bridge will now remain open on all tours. When your tour is done, you go home.

2. WE GOT INMATE IDs BACK IN PLAY

You can't run a secure facility if you don't know who you're moving. The lack of inmate IDs was creating a safety nightmare for court runs, hospital details, and just running the floor. It violated the Department's own policy and State Commission standards.

The Fix: I put this on the agenda repeatedly until they couldn't ignore the safety risk anymore.

The Result: The Department has finally launched an initiative to issue proper ID cards to inmates across all facilities.

3. WE RESTARTED DRUG TESTING

The drug testing program was falling apart. Machines in each facility were inoperable or just not being used, and the testing kits weren't even picking up Fentanyl–the very thing causing overdoses and putting officers' careers at risk.

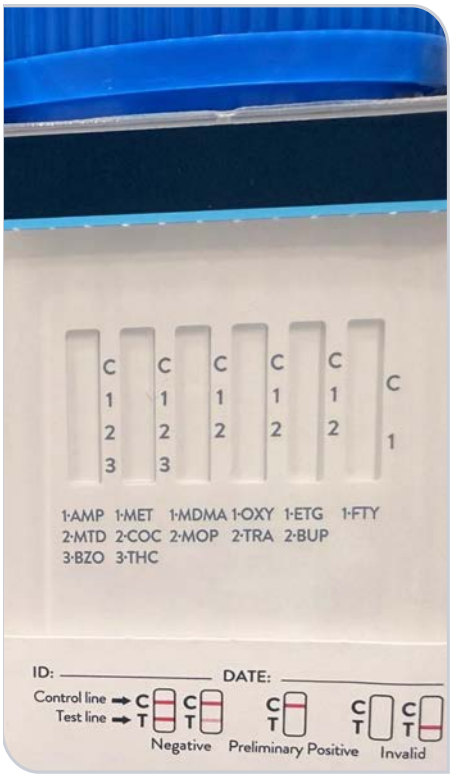
The Fix: We demanded they fix the hardware and update the kits to catch what is actually on the street today.

The Result: The Department is resuming proper drug testing in all facilities.

4. GENETEC ACCESS: HOLDING THE LINE

We found out some facilities were stopping Officers from viewing Genetec footage after submitting an initial report. This is against policy. You need that footage to ensure your report is accurate.

The Fix: We pushed back, and the Deputy Commissioner of Security has sent out a Department-wide email confirming that staff "must" be allowed to view the video upon request.



The Reality: We got the department to remind your wardens, but now "it is on you." You have to demand to see that video. If a facility manager denies you access after a use-of-force submission, do not just accept it—reach out to your facility delegate or an Executive Board Member immediately.

PENDING ACTION: THE FIGHT FOR NEW RIOT VESTS

While we solved the issues above, there is still one major fight ongoing. My recent investigation into the Riot Response Equipment (RNDC staging area) revealed that the gear used for extractions and riots was issued in April 2014. The manufacturer says this gear expires after 5 to 10 years. We are way past that.

COBA is not going to let you run into a riot or inmate extraction wearing expired vests.

The Status: The Department hasn't moved fast enough to replace them. So, I have filed an official PESH (Public Employee Safety and Health) complaint. I will not stop fighting this until the Department provides the up-to-date, safe equipment you are entitled to.

These are just a few of the issues I've addressed over the last 12 months, but the fight is ongoing. We are only as good as the things we know. If there are any security concerns in your building, you need to bring them to the attention of the COBA representative in your facility immediately. To stay on top of this, I will send monthly security emails to your facility delegates, requesting a list of any unresolved security matters. We can only fix what we know about, so speak up.

Stay safe, and watch each other's backs.

MESSAGE FROM THIRD VICE PRESIDENT **Antoinette Anderson**

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ADVOCACY IN ACTION: STANDING UP FOR OUR MEMBERS EVERY SINGLE DAY

During this reporting period as your 3rd Vice President, my mission has been straightforward:

Take care of our members and make sure no issue gets lost in the system. Every day, I have worked to ensure that the officers who protect our city are themselves protected—whether they are facing payroll errors, navigating FMLA, fighting unfair discipline, or simply trying to understand their rights. This work is not glamorous, but it is essential. And it has been my honor to serve you.

Direct Member Support: The Heart of the Work

Much of my time has been spent in the trenches with our members—handling the real, everyday problems that can derail careers and cause serious financial stress.

Payroll issues have been a constant focus. I have worked with members who were shorted overtime, missing retroactive pay, denied proper night differential, or dealing with other pay discrepancies that should never have happened in the first place. When the system stalled or answers did not add up, I pushed harder—escalating issues to Payroll, HR, and our legal team until they got the attention they deserved.

FMLA concerns came up regularly, and I handled each case individually. Whether it was delayed approvals, confusion about protections, or members being pressured to return to work prematurely, I stepped in to advocate and clarify their rights.

Discipline matters also demanded significant attention.

I have been meeting bi-weekly with Chief Rembert to review suspensions.

During our discussions, it was confirmed that AWOL suspensions are only being issued in true "no show/no call" situations after a proper investigation—an important safeguard against unfair discipline.

Several officers were successfully reinstated during this period, and as academy graduations bring new officers into the system and facility movement increases, I have been encouraging members to submit transfer requests in writing to protect themselves and create a clear paper trail in January and July of each year.

Beyond formal cases, I have stayed in contact with members—taking calls and texts about workplace challenges, personal struggles, and everything in between. I have processed MOC referrals and

ensured that all MOC documents were at once sent to COBA's attorneys, so members could hear from an attorney as quickly as possible. I have also continued to process COBA Store orders and coordinate merchandise distribution.

I have also focused on creating stronger systems and structures to support our members over the long haul.

I have formally requested the establishment of a Probationary Officers Committee to provide mentorship and structured support to probationary officers. These officers deserve more than to be thrown into the deep end. They need guidance, resources, and a real chance to succeed and pass probation. To better serve our members and their families, I have updated the Widows' & Children's list to ensure our contact and support efforts are correct and compassionate.

I have completed holiday aid check requests, so families received the help they were counting on. And I have begun developing a more transparent scholarship application and selection process so members can see exactly how decisions are made and trust that the process is fair.

Moving Forward Together

This reporting period has been about hands-on advocacy and systemic improvement, solving individual problems while building better tools, committees, and processes to support our members for the long term.

I have worked to ensure that officers facing payroll errors, FMLA confusion, unfair discipline, or probationary challenges have a voice and a fighter in their corner.

At the same time, I have pushed forward initiatives that will strengthen our union's ability to protect and support every member.

My goal remains the same: to make sure our officers are heard, protected, and supported in real and tangible ways.

This work is not easy, but it is necessary. And I am committed to continuing this fight every single day.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me at aanderson@cobanyc.org.

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MESSAGE FROM LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN **Daniel Monaco**

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With the Mayor's race officially concluded and the upcoming election of the NYS Governor, it is imperative for both the COBA and membership to stand united at the forefront of the polls and election booths to enact the change that we would like to see. As Legislative Chairman, it has been my distinct honor to represent the membership in both Albany and City Hall.

We have had some outstanding advancements this year whether it was stopping a City Council bill that would strip us of our chemical agents or lobbying the entire Senate, Assembly and City Council to understand the hardships of our officers. With great stride we were able to procure a home rule message for our 20-year **Pension Bill A6942** which would restore pension equity amongst all tiers.

This advocacy led to a unanimous vote from all houses in the State Legislature and City Council to advance our bill to the Governor's desk.

The result might not have been what we were seeking, but I firmly believe with the continued support of all houses that we will push this bill across the finish line.

Another key piece of legislation we are seeking is our triple shift bill A 6658 which would cap officers working 17 hours a day and avoid the exploitation of officers to work triple shifts. We feel that this bill will lead to more officers being hired with the city and the department, knowing they cannot have us at their disposal to work around the clock thus leading to more officers being hired.

Our Social Security Offset bill S4666 is specifically designed for our CF 22 Tier members, and this Bill would eradicate the unjust Social Security offset that takes place when an officer is retired and eligible for Social Security. There have been key pieces of legislation passed on a federal level regarding this issue, and we are hoping to use that for our argument and advocacy to overturn this pension inequity.

Bill number **A1742** is our **Sexual Assault Bill**, and it would upgrade the sexual assault of an Officer from a misdemeanor to a felony. We are all too familiar with the lenient penalties inmates face when officers are assaulted and this Bill would make a meaningful impact in deterring assaults on our female members.

All these pieces of legislation would significantly change the quality of life for our officers for the better. Pension equity and safer working environments are always paramount, and we know that these key pieces would create both equity and safety.

It is also my profound honor to oversee GRVC, CIB, SST, SRT, ID/SIU and Firearms review Board as a Board Member.

As the Board Member overseeing the Firearms Review Board, it has been a pleasure to help restore the firearm privileges of almost 100 members this year and to have minimized the backlog of cases to just calendar year 2025. ID/SIU hold an important role departmentally and working with them to help minimize discipline and further the understanding of policy has been an eye-opening experience. SIU has done an exceptional job in its efforts to find contraband and has helped create a safer work environment for all staff.

During my time overseeing GRVC along with Recording Secretary Neil Renois and our outstanding team of Delegates, we have had the opportunity to make significant changes.

We were able to update and renovate locker rooms and bathrooms for staff. We were also able to advocate for new cell doors in a housing area, with the hopes of adding onto that.

We have had tremendous success in advocating against staff discipline for things that were out of their control, which include both suspensions and formal discipline. I take pride in touring and speaking with our officers about the hardships they face. Our agenda for this coming year is to ensure the increase in meal reliefs and the equitable distribution of overtime across the facility.

Our specialized commands include CIB, SRT and SST and are the backbone of our department. It has been an honor to work with CIB in strengthening arrests cases and advocating on behalf of officers with the District Attorney's Office to issue tougher sentencing across the board, along with upgraded felony charges that won't be disregarded at sentencing.

SRT and SST have worked nonstop this year providing safety and security for all facilities. Supporting them through their tireless work has been rewarding at every level.

Whether providing meals in between searches or showing up to show gratitude while on a search, it is a privilege to watch them work and discover countless weapons and pieces of contraband.

MESSAGE FROM CORRESPONDING SECRETARY **Kamaal Moore**

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Over the last year as an Executive Board Member of the Correction Officers' Benevolent Association, I've focused on several key areas across the commands I oversee.

Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH):
At OATH, I've achieved significant victories in overturning termination and resignation cases, particularly those involving excessive use of force or undue familiarity. Instead of facing termination, officers have been able to keep their jobs thanks to fair offers we secured. This has ensured that officers receive fair treatment and a second chance.

Additionally, I've overturned countless Memorandums of Complaint (MOCs), which are formal charges, into Command Disciplines (CDs) and admin files. Removing permanent marks off officers' records, these charges are downgraded and removed after one year, providing officers with a much fairer outcome.

Health Management Division (HMD):
I've worked closely with HMD to overturn suspensions, implement progressive discipline, and request specialists for officers with specific medical needs. I've also trained Delegates to assist with hearings.

West Facility, Queens Courts, and Bronx Courts:
At the West Facility, I've ensured fair overtime distribution and improved conditions. In Queens and Bronx Courts, I've focused on equitable overtime, wellness initiatives, and facility improvements.

Looking Ahead:
For the upcoming year, I will continue assisting with suspension appeals, command discipline appeals, and chronic absence appeals. I'll keep advocating for officers, holding management accountable, and ensuring they have the tools to handle any challenges. I'll also continue focusing on boosting morale and making sure officers are well supported.

MESSAGE FROM
RECORDING SECRETARY
Neil Renois

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FIX THE CELLS BEFORE SOMEONE GETS HURT!

For far too long, the agency has ignored a critical and dangerous reality inside of GRVC and OBCC: **inoperable and antiquated cell doors are putting members of service, staff, and individuals in custody in harm's way every single day.**

The City Charter is clear – the agency is responsible for maintaining the facilities under its jurisdiction. Yet the Rikers closure law has created a contradictory and paralyzing situation: because the administration claims it cannot initiate capital projects tied to long-term infrastructure, the very systems meant to protect us are being left to deteriorate. And we are the ones paying the price.

Maintenance teams, working with limited authority and resources, are forced to apply band-aid fixes that fail the moment real pressure hits. In November alone, **multiple assaults occurred during emergency lock-ins**, incidents that could have been prevented had these cell doors functioned as intended. During several late-evening tours, I personally observed housing areas, where officers could not possibly secure individuals due to equipment failure. Yet instead of addressing the root cause, the agency continues to scapegoat our members—blaming them for circumstances entirely outside their control.

Let's say this plainly: safety cannot be selective.
If the safety of the men and women who operate these facilities—and the individuals entrusted to our care—is truly a priority, then the agency should spare no expense in delivering it.

We need **robust, modern locking systems**, not more temporary fixes on systems that should have been replaced years ago. This is not a negotiating position. This is not a political talking point.

This is a matter of life, safety, and responsibility. It's time for immediate intervention. It's time to honor the City Charter. It's time to stop pretending these issues will fix themselves. Fix the cells. Our safety depends on it!

MESSAGE FROM FIRST CITY-WIDE TRUSTEE **Rodney McQueen**

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As the First City-Wide Trustee assigned to Headquarters, I approach this role with a deep understanding of the Department's policies, procedures, and operational challenges. Drawing on years of experience and institutional knowledge, I work diligently to address the complex and often unpublicized issues that impact our members. Many of the most pressing concerns facing officers never reach public view, and resolving them requires discretion, persistence, and above all, trust. Earning and maintaining that trust is essential to effectively advocating for our members and protecting their rights.

A significant part of my work involves safeguarding officers' financial stability. I have assisted numerous members in resolving payroll discrepancies caused by inaccurate scanner readings, equipment malfunctions, or administrative errors. These issues can create serious financial hardship for officers and their families. Through direct engagement with the appropriate administrative units, I have ensured corrections are made promptly and that affected members receive the back pay to which they are entitled.

In addition, I actively support members navigating Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) matters. Whether expediting urgent medical claims, correcting improperly denied applications, or guiding officers through the documentation process, I remain committed to ensuring that members receive the protections guaranteed under the law. During medical emergencies, timely action is critical, and I prioritize these cases to provide immediate assistance and clarity.

I have also been deeply involved in advocating for officers seeking reinstatement after separation from service. Each case presents unique circumstances that require careful review, procedural knowledge, and persistent representation. By working closely with union leadership, legal representatives, and departmental officials, I strive to secure fair outcomes and restore members to their positions whenever possible.

The Correction Officers' Benevolent Association stands strongest when its members know they are supported by experienced, professional advocates who are actively engaged in the issues that matter most. Every day, I operate with the guiding principle of "Officers First." Our mission is to respond swiftly, address concerns thoroughly, and uphold the dignity and rights of every member. Because if we do not stand firmly for our officers, no one else will.

MESSAGE FROM BROOKLYN BOROUGH TRUSTEE **Christopher Cruz**

Seven Years of Union Advocacy Results in Major Training Facility Upgrades for NYC Correction Officers.

After seven years of persistent advocacy, the Correction Officers' Benevolent Association (COBA) has achieved a major victory in securing a long–overdue modernization of the firing range at Rodman's Neck. Construction began in 2023, and Phase One of the project has now been fully completed, with Phase Two currently underway.

Phase One delivers the first comprehensive upgrade to the range in decades. All outdated structures previously used for firearms training have been replaced with new, modernized facilities.

Enhancements include:

- New classrooms equipped with modern workstations and ample space for "manual of arms" and instructor demonstration.
- Large instructional monitors ensuring clear visibility of coursework for all trainees.
- Upgraded locker rooms providing secure storage for uniforms and equipment.
- Fully operational bathrooms and showers, replacing the outdated area long referred to as "The Hill."
- Dedicated office and cubicle space for all staff assigned to the Training and Development Division (TDD).
- A modernized arsenal, designed for secure ammunition and firearm storage, with improved space to clean and repair firearms.

Phase Two, now in progress, focuses on the demolition and removal of the old structures to complete the full modernization of the training environment.

These upgrades represent a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to improving the safety, professionalism, and working conditions of New York City's Correction Officers. A modern training environment isn't optional, it's essential. Our officers deserve the best tools, facilities, and support as they carry out their mission.

Once Phase Two is completed, the Rodman's Neck firing range will stand as a fully modernized training facility, reflecting the professionalism and expertise of the Correction Officers who train there.

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MESSAGE FROM BRONX BOROUGH TRUSTEE **Vanessa Quinones**

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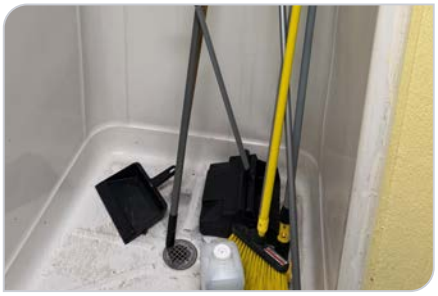

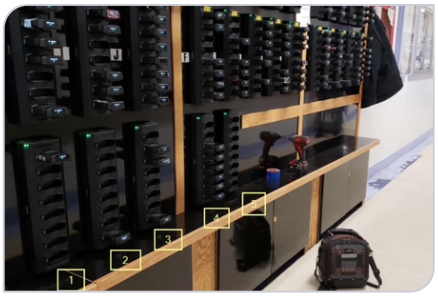

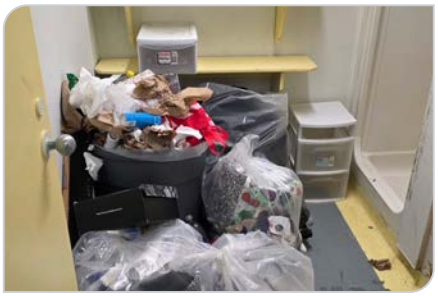

I am writing to provide a comprehensive update on the ongoing efforts and accomplishments during my tenure as COBA Bronx Borough Trustee, where I oversee the Rose M. Singer Center (RMSC), the CARE unit, and the Elmhurst Hospital Prison Ward (EHPW). Over the past year, I have tirelessly addressed numerous critical issues directly impacting the well-being, working conditions, and rights of our officers.

At RMSC, one of the most pressing challenges was the longstanding deterioration of the locker rooms. After years of neglect, I filed complaints with the Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau. Thanks to this effort, construction has begun on the male locker room, marking an important step forward in improving the daily environment for our officers.

Beyond physical infrastructure concerns, I have actively tackled unfair scheduling practices affecting officers' rotations. Many officers were improperly staggered in their shifts despite having been rightfully awarded specific posts. I successfully argued to the administration that officers awarded these posts should not have their schedules altered on days the posts operate. As a result, those officers were restored to their 5x2 rotations with their rightful days off, directly improving schedule stability and morale.

In addition to conducting command discipline hearings, management has repeatedly failed to bargain in good faith. This persistent unfair treatment compelled me to file an Improper Practice charge. Winning this case led to the removal of a hearing officer from the facility, effectively preventing that individual from conducting future hearings at RMSC. This victory was not just for one officer but for all, given that numerous officers faced similar unjust treatment. Leveraging this Improper Practice, we were also able to get another officer facing MOC charges dismissed.

At Elmhurst Hospital Prison Ward, I filed a grievance to restore mutual privileges that had been unfairly limited. We reached an agreement satisfactory to all officers assigned there, at least until staffing improves.

Advocating for our members remains an ongoing commitment. I have consistently fought for the allocation of additional body-worn camera slots.

Since the introduction of body cameras, sharing docking stations with RESH created space shortages. Through persistent dialogue and pushback with management, we have made progress in securing more slots, ensuring that officers have reliable access to this critical equipment for protection and accountability.

I also addressed the concerning reduction of sanitation posts on shifts, which compromised facility cleanliness and safety.

After raising these issues, the facility now guarantees the presence of at least one sanitation officer on every post, maintaining standards conducive to a healthy and secure working environment.

Furthermore, I confronted the problematic assignment of triple tours to officers performing hospital runs. My intervention led to the removal of a supervisor from the control room who deliberately neglected her duties by failing to generate tour certification reports.

This negligence had prevented officers from receiving rightful overtime pay. By addressing this, we have safeguarded officers' compensation and rectified supervisory inefficiencies that compromised operational fairness.

In conclusion, my dedication to protecting the rights and improving conditions for officers remains steadfast. I will continue to fight for equitable treatment, safer workplaces, and proper recognition of the efforts of every officer under my jurisdiction.

NEW YORK CITY CORRECTION OFFICERS RECEIVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION

FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

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On February 11th, COBA President Benny Boscio, Corresponding Secretary Kamaal Moore, Recording Secretary Neil Renois, Bronx Borough Trustee Vanessa Quinones and Delegates James Quinn, Timothy Sands, and Alicia Haynes proudly joined correction unions from across the nation to honor correction officers for their exemplary service in the line of duty. Correction Officers Steven Maiorino and Chad Peters received the 2025 Corrections USA Valor Award for demonstrating exceptional courage and fearlessness in the face of great danger, following a vicious inmate assault in which they sustained serious injuries.

Their brave actions to prevent the inmate from hurting additional officers undoubtably prevented a potential tragedy from occurring.

Correction Officer Garlen Jenkins never missed a single day of work, never called out sick and was never late during his entire 47-year career with the NYC Department of Correction. For his unwavering commitment and dedication to both his fellow officers and the NYC Department of Correction, Corrections USA presented Correction Officer Jenkins with the 2025 CUSA Image Award.

COBA IN YOUR LEGAL CORNER

WHEN COBA FIGHTS, OUR MEMBERS WIN!

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COBA'S ATTORNEYS SUCCESSFULLY DEFEND YOUR RIGHTS AT OATH

- Handled over **754** Disciplinary Pre-Trial Hearings.
- Over **271** cases Reduced from MOC to a CD. Approximately 10 cases were Reduced from MOC to R&R (Remove and Restore – meaning, the case goes away).
- Saved more than **75** Officers from Termination.
- Kept almost $1,212,640.00 in Officers' pockets.
- Presided over **232** administrative cases being Dismissed and 77 where prosecution was Deferred Achieved Dismissal in almost **12** Medical Incompetence Cases.
- Shaved off more than 3,445 Days in penalties sought by DOC at OATH.
- Scheduled approximately **100** OATH Trials, 8% of which went to trial, and achieved extraordinary settlements in the others.
- There were over **10** Criminal cases that resulted in Dismissals.
- There were approximately **15** Criminal cases that resulted in favorable resolutions, including ACD, violations or non-criminal reductions.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF CASES THAT WERE SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVED FOR COBA MEMBERS:

Felony Criminal Possession of a Weapon, Assault 3, Criminal Mischief, and Harassment. ACD (Dismissed)

Officer was arrested and was charged with Felony Criminal Possession of a Weapon, Assault 3, Criminal Mischief, and Harassment. Case ended with a favorable resolution of Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal (ACD).

Burglary in the 2nd Degree and Other Related Charges; Dismissed

Officer was arrested within the confines of the 75th Precinct in Kings County for Burglary in the 2nd degree and other related Charges. The case was dismissed.

Criminal Mischief; Dismissed
Officer was arrested within the confines of the 63rd Precinct in Kings County for Domestic Violence Criminal Mischief. The case was dismissed.

Case Dismissed
Officer was charged with Inefficient Performance of Duty by DOC. Case dismissed (Administratively Filed).

Medical Sympathy application granted
Officer was charged with Medical Incompetence by DOC. Medical Sympathy application granted by DOC.

Case Dismissed
Officer was charged with failing to scan a PIC into the Intake area. Case dismissed.

Admin Filed– Case Dismissed
Officer was charged with using MK-9 on a single PIC to the head/face area. Case Dismissed.

Admin Filed– Case Dismissed
Officer was charged with three MOC's relating to two UOF Inefficient Performance of Duty and one Order Failure to Obey. All three cases Administratively Filed (Dismissed).

Assault and Harassment; ACD Queens
Officer charged with Assault in the Third Degree, Endangering the Welfare of a Child, and Harassment in the Second Degree. Result: Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal (ACD).

Case reduced from an MOC and 45 Days to CD & 10
In a case where officer was accused of a Use of Force violation related to pushing a restrained inmate into a cell where the inmate fell onto the floor and sustained injuries. DOC's case fell apart at PTCs.

Assault 3, Obstruction of Breathing, Endangering Welfare of a Child, and Harassment 2; Dismissed
Officer was arrested within the confines of the 67th Precinct in Kings County for Assault in the Third Degree and Other Related Charges. Case Dismissed.

MOC resolved for Command Discipline and 8 compensation days
Officer was charged with three MOC's relating to three UOF Inefficient Performance of Duty and DOC offered 30 compensation days.

Officer saved from Termination
Officer was charged with a UOF Excessive (F2) and UOF Chemical Agent and was facing termination.

Global Settlement of Command Discipline and 5 compensation days, Case Dismissed, 15 days (a fraction of what DOC demanded) language changed to remove "false" and misleading"
Officer was charged with a UOF Excessive (F2), two Inefficient Performance of Duty, and an AWOL.

Success at Trial: Job Saved
Officer was charged with 30 denied Personal Emergencies related to childcare where DOC initially approved 90 day leave, only to revoke the leave after 30 days. At trial, secured dismissal of the charges.

Success at Trial: Job Saved
Officer charged with undue familiarity where the officer had professional relationships with two people who later became inmates and officer never notified.

Officer also accused of outside employment as well. DOC sought termination. After cross examination of DOC's first witness, the trial judge told DOC that there would not be a termination, thereby leading to a favorable resolution.

Criminal and Discipline
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COBA Makes Significant Dental Benefit Improvements for Retirees, Effective January 1, 2026

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We're happy to share that effective January 1, 2026, dental co-payments for all COBA Retirees for diagnostic, preventative and basic services (Class I and Class II services) have been reduced by fifty percent (50%). Beginning on January 1, 2026, you can view your updated dental benefits by downloading the my United Health Care app or by visiting www.uhc.com.

Your personalized information will be available on that date. In the meantime, please see below to view some examples of how this benefit improvement will reduce your co-pays for Class I (preventative & diagnostic services) and class II (basic services).

COUNTY STATE	RR*	RRN**	ELIGIBLE MEMBERS
QUEENS, NY	806	806	339
KINGS, NY	572	572	305
SUFFOLK, NY	668	668	213
NASSAU, NY	1044	1044	206
BRONX, NY	384	384	193
RICHMOND, NY	803	803	180
ORANGE, NY	224	224	117
NEW YORK, NY	178	9	81
WESTCHESTER, NY	250	250	76
MECKLENBURG, NC	N/A	259	65
GWINNET, GA	N/A	189	54
ORANGE, FL	9	233	47
HENRY, GA	N/A	105	43
WAKE, NC	N/A	138	42
MONROE, PA	2	7	40
CLARK, NV	5	97	36
PALM BEACH, FL	13	146	34
KENT, DE	N/A	93	33
CHESTERFIELD, SC	N/A	78	4
HORRY, SC	N/A	76	30
NEWTON, GA	N/A	18	20

*RR utilizes the Liberty Network for all members.

**RRN uses the Liberty Network for NY members and PPO20 for out-of-area members.

In addition, as a reminder, Healthplex/UHC has worked to improve its extensive provider network available to COBA's retirees. Please refer to this chart showcasing the extensive provider network available to you. The charts are based on the highest concentration of membership.

UHC's dental network not only has unsurpassed coverage in the tri-state area, but is far reaching across the United States offering retirees dental coverage across the country. If your dental provider is not currently part of our network, please submit their nomination to join UHC's dental network through the MYUHC app or UHC website. UHC will do its best to invite them to join our dental panel.

SAMPLE CO-PAY REDUCTIONS

Sample of 50% reduction in co-pays for Class I (preventative & diagnostic services) and Class II (basic services) all of which will be outlined in the new benefit summaries on January 1, 2026 which you can obtain online.

In New York PPO Retirees-RR Group	Current Co-Pay	50% Reduction in Co-Pay
0160 - RE-EVALUATION, LIMITED, PROBLEM FOCUS	$30.00	$15.00
0170 - RE-EVALUATION POST OP VISIT	$18.00	$9.00
0180 - INTRA ORAL COMPREHENSIVE SERIES	$22.00	$11.00
2394 - RESIN BASED COMPOSITES	$22.00	$11.00
2950 - CORE BUILDUP	$90.20	$45.10

Outside of New York-RRN	Current Co-Pay	50% Reduction in Co-Pay
0120 - PERIODIC ORAL EXAM	$19.00	$9.50
0180 - COMPREHENSIVE PERIODONTAL EVALUATION	$71.00	$35.50
0277 - VERTICAL BITEWINGS- 7 TO 8 IMAGES	$72.00	$36.00
1510 - SPACE MAINTAINER- FIXED, UNILATERAL, PER QUAD	$118.00	$59.00
7210 - EXTRACTION ERUPTED TOOTH	$111.00	$55.00

INTRODUCING
TRUE RECKONING
LAW ENFORCEMENT MOTORCYCLE CLUB

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To the Dedicated Members of the New York City Department of Correction: We proudly introduce the True Reckoning Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club, a brotherhood forged in service, loyalty, and the unbreakable bond of having each other's back.

Founded by correction officers for correction officers, True Reckoning stands as a symbol of unity, resilience, and pride in our shared calling.

We ride not just for the thrill, but for the honor of representing those who walk the toughest beats with courage and conviction.

True Reckoning is the only NYC correction motorcycle club officially backed by COBA, a distinction that reflects our commitment to integrity, accountability, and the values that define our profession.

Our patch carries weight, not just in design, but in meaning. It represents every officer who's ever stood the line, every friend who's never let another fall alone, and every ride that reminds us we're stronger together. We welcome all riders and correction officers, whether seasoned bikers or new to the road, to fellowship with us.

Join us in building something greater than ourselves: a community rooted in respect, tradition, and the unwavering promise that no one rides alone.

To start your journey, you must possess a valid New York State Motorcycle Drivers License and be the proud owner of any Motorcycle, (Cruiser, Sportsbike, Can Am, Slingshot) with no less than 600cc. True Reckoning rides for you. Stand with us. Ride with us. Brotherhood lives here.

For information on how to get started on a journey of brotherhood and sisterhood:

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Chikuyo Allotta (WF)
President
718.688.4185

Correction Officer
Nielson Stephen (K9)
Vice President
347.476.7716

Deputy Warden
Denise Phillips (EMTC)
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- Awards Dinner

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- Hole Sign

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• DINNER RECEPTION:	$250

ALL PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE COBA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

FRONT

BACK

125 Years of Honor. One Legacy.

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Celebrate the strength, sacrifice, and unity of the boldest union in the greatest city in the world.

For 125 years, the members of the Correction Officers' Benevolent Association have stood watch over the City of New York with courage and unwavering dedication. Now, you have the opportunity to own a powerful symbol of that history, a limited edition 125th Anniversary Commemorative Challenge Coin.

This is more than a collector's item. It is a piece of living history. A coin with meaning.

EVERY DETAIL TELLS A STORY:

The Key — Inspired by the key carried daily by New York City Correction Officers, symbolizing duty, responsibility, and constant vigilance.

The Shield — The official union shield, representing protection, strength, and the unity of New York City's Boldest.

Rikers Island — Etched on the reverse side, honoring the place where generations of officers have served with resilience and pride.

The Pillars — Standing tall for CARE, CUSTODY and CONTROL upon which Correction Officers serve in the best city in the world, the City of New York.

OWN A PIECE OF HISTORY

This commemorative enamel coin marks 125 years of service, sacrifice, and solidarity. It represents what it truly means to be family, because in this profession, we take care of our own.

All proceeds from the sale of this coin will directly benefit the COBA Widows and Children's Fund, ensuring that the families of our fallen heroes are supported, protected, and never forgotten.

This is your opportunity to:

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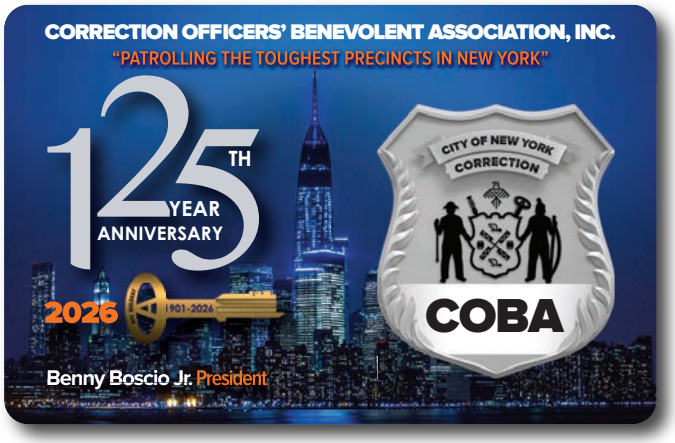

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