



New York City Comptroller
Scott M. Stringer

NEWS

PRESS RELEASE

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COMPTROLLER STRINGER CLAIMSTAT ALERT: CLAIMS, JUDGMENTS AND SETTLEMENTS AGAINST DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION CONTINUE TO SKYROCKET

*Claims have risen 27 percent between FY 2014 and FY 2015 and
172 percent since FY 2009*

*Settlements and judgments spike by more than 66 percent from
FY 2014 to FY 2015*

(New York, NY) – A new ClaimStat Alert released today by New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer found more than 2,800 Personal Injury Correctional Facility claims were filed against the City in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, a 27 percent increase from FY 2014 and a rise of 172 percent since FY 2009. The Comptroller’s report also found that settlements and judgments arising from this type of claim rose 66 percent in FY 2015 to \$13.1 million and detailed trends among specific facilities at Rikers Island.

“We have a humanitarian crisis on our hands at Rikers that is hurting both inmates and Corrections Officers, and we have an obligation as a City to confront suffering and violence in our jails,” Comptroller Stringer said. “Eighteen months ago, my office showed that claims and settlements were skyrocketing at Rikers and today, we’ve found that these trends have significantly worsened. We cannot accept these increases as inevitable – we need to reduce claims filed against the City and take action to ensure a safe environment for all.”

The new ClaimStat Alert analyzed Personal Injury Correctional Facility claims (“claims”) against the New York City Department of Correction (DOC) and settlements and judgements related to these claims between Fiscal Year 2009 and 2015.

Findings include:

Personal Injury Correctional Facility Claims Surge

- In Fiscal Year 2015, 2,846 claims were filed against the DOC, representing an increase of 27 percent between 2014 and 2015, continuing a recent upward trend.

- Over the last seven fiscal years, the number of claims filed jumped 172 percent, climbing from 1,047 claims in FY 2009 to 2,846 claims in FY 2015.
- As of February 2016, preliminary FY 2016 data show a 39 percent increase in the number of claims filed as compared to the same period in FY 2015.

Soaring Costs of Settlements and Judgments

- New York City paid \$13.1 million in FY 2015 in settlements and judgments for Personal Injury Correctional Facility claims, a 66 percent increase from FY 2014 and a 122 percent increase since 2009.

Rikers Island's Problems Persist

- Eight of the ten facilities with the most claims are on Rikers Island.
- For the seventh year in a row, Rikers' Anna M. Kross Center has the most claims (593).
- The site with the greatest percentage increase in claims between FY14 and FY15 was Rikers' North Infirmary Command, which saw claims rise by 170 percent.

In July 2014, Comptroller Stringer launched [ClaimStat](#), a data-driven tool designed to drive down the cost of judgments and settlements by empowering City agencies to reduce claims through changes in training or resource delivery. Over the last two years, Comptroller Stringer has published several reports about Rikers Island, including a [ClaimStat Alert](#) in August 2014 and an [analysis](#) in October 2015 detailing how the cost per inmate in the City's jails has increased even as violence has grown. In November 2015, Comptroller Stringer became the first Citywide elected official to [call for the closure of Rikers Island](#).

"If we are going to live up to our reputation as a City, we must have a criminal justice system that is fair and functional. Reducing violence in our City jails must be a top priority. We stand ready to work with the Department of Correction to leverage this data in real time to protect inmates, guards and taxpayer dollars," Stringer said.

To see the full 2016 ClaimStat Alert on the Department of Correction, please [click here](#).