

Criminal Justice Department Information and Advocacy Training Information



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI

New York State

Advocacy Training Program

If you have a mentally ill loved one who is incarcerated, the Advocacy Training Program is here to help you help them.

We provide the training and tools you need to navigate the criminal justice system so you can help your loved one get the proper placement and help they need.

- Learn about the agencies in your area.
- Learn what resources are available so you can advocate effectively.
- Learn effective ways to communicate in crisis situations.
- Hear from speakers who will share their knowledge, experience, and expertise.
- Learn about jail diversion opportunities at time of arrest.
- Learn how to help improve the quality of life for those in prison.



What is the Criminal Justice Advocacy Training Program?

The Advocacy Training Program is a one-day program offered by NAMI-NYS for persons interested in advocating for loved ones with mental illness who are in the criminal justice system and to teach others do be a criminal justice advocate.

Criminal Justice Advocacy is necessary because people with psychiatric disabilities are a significant population within the criminal justice system.

The NAMI-NYS Criminal Justice Advocacy Program works with community mental health agencies to strengthen services to persons with serious mental illness who are either diverted out of the justice system or are released from correctional facilities.

Advocacy Training Program Overview

- Overview of the principles of advocacy.
- Overview of the criminal justice system and the five sequential intercepts where advocates can help divert loved ones from jails and prisons or help them while they are incarcerated.
 1. The program teaches the advocate how to communicate with justice and mental health professionals.
 2. Information on discharge planning and involuntary and voluntary admissions.
 3. The reality of what the criminal justice system can and cannot do.
 4. Information on establishing “single-focused” community coalitions that advocate for jail diversion initiatives.
 5. Tips for working with the media and techniques for lobbying.

Working Toward a Better Tomorrow

The road ahead may seem uncertain and you may not be sure what happens while your loved one is incarcerated or when they are released. The Criminal Justice Program will help guide you through the criminal justice system and the road to re-entry. Job skills, housing options, counseling and other services may be arranged prior to release from incarceration.



Re-entry programs create job skills.

The Criminal Justice Program works with NAMI-NYS affiliates to set up local criminal justice committees and support groups to provide assistance to families when dealing with the criminal justice system.

We hope you will get involved. There are services available, and we can guide you to resources that you may otherwise overlook.

Contact info for NAMI-NYS Criminal Justice Program

Our staff is available
Monday-Friday
9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
to help you.

Helpline:

800-950-3228
(NY only)

518-462-2000
(Capital District or
outside NY)

Email:

criminaljustice@naminys.org

NAMI-NYS
260 Washington Ave
Albany, NY

www.naminys.org



NAMI is Here to Help

The National Alliance on Mental Illness NYS (NAMI-NYS) is a grassroots organization providing education, support and advocacy for persons with serious mental illness and their families.

Founded in 1982, NAMI-NYS supports 50 local affiliates across New York State. NAMI-NYS Criminal Justice Advocacy Training is the vehicle that drives our communities to advocate for “Front Line Jail Diversion” to divert citizens with psychiatric disabilities from jails and prisons across New York State.

Estimates show that 10% of those in prisons and jails have a severe and persistent mental illness.

NAMI-NYS Criminal Justice Program

The criminal justice program provides information to NAMI NYS members on current treatment programs, strategies, proposed legislation, etc. to assist them in advocating for improvements in services for persons with serious mental illness who are involved with the criminal justice system.

Training programs are provided to criminal justice professionals to promote an understanding of incarcerated and seriously mentally ill persons and how best to address their needs.

The Criminal Justice Department is headed by the Director of Criminal Justice who helps families navigate the justice system when a family member is in trouble and faces criminal charges.

The Director will also enable NAMI-NYS affiliates to educate members about criminal justice issues and work to improve mental health training programs for law enforcement, court officials and correctional personnel.

NAMI-NYS's Annual Educational Conference

Family members, consumers and mental health professionals from around the state gather every fall to network and hear the latest developments in scientific research, community services and criminal justice services from the state's leading researchers, service providers and policy makers.

Our Goal:

Improving services for people with mental illness involved in the criminal justice system.

Resources

Brochures:

- Special reports and fact sheets on medications
- Treatments
- Services
- Criminal justice programs

A comprehensive lending library with over 100 titles covering a range of mental illness disorders.

Some of the topics covered:

- Coping strategies
- Methods of recovery
- Navigating the mental health system
- Advocating for change

Additionally the NAMI website contains a comprehensive resource center with thousands of support and criminal justice organizations listed by geographic area.

Follow Us



NAMI-New-York-State



www.naminys.org



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We provide:

Criminal Justice Advocacy Training to teach people how to become criminal justice advocates.

Facts about Prisons and Mental Illness

The rate of mental illness in US state prisons and jails is at least triple the rate of the general population. According to the NYS Department of Correctional Services, as of January, 2011 there are 57,000 inmates in the NYS correctional facilities, 8,000 of whom have been diagnosed with mental illness.

The Justice Department calculates that one in one hundred US adults are behind bars, with higher incarceration rates for Hispanic adults (1 in 36) and Black adults (1 in 15).

Estimates show that 10% of those in prisons and jails have a severe and persistent mental illness. Unfamiliarity with mental illness on the part of the police, courts and corrections can lead to

inadequate or inappropriate care within the justice system. A growing body of research and information can help State, Federal and local agencies properly treat and manage such persons in correctional facilities and in the community.



For an Advocacy Training schedule and helpful resources visit our website:

<http://naminys.org/criminaljustice.html>

or email: criminaljustice@naminys.org