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THE LIBERTY FUND TO INTRODUCE NEW ROR SERVICES

With the Onset of Bail Reform in January 2020, The Liberty Fund Innovates to the ROR Population.

NEW YORK, NY, January 9, 2020— As misdemeanor bail is drastically reduced in January 2020, [The Liberty Fund](#) will build upon its citywide charitable bail program and innovate to the ROR Case Management Program. This new initiative is a proactive response to New York State's monumental criminal justice reforms by providing pretrial, voluntary, person-centered, and court-based case management to individuals released on their own recognizance (ROR).

Effective January 1, 2020, sweeping criminal justice reform legislation will drastically limit cash bail and pretrial detention for most misdemeanors and nonviolent felony defendants in New York State. These new changes mean more New Yorkers will be Released on their Own Recognizance (ROR), pledging to make their court appearances and find the help needed to prevent any future missteps.

In 2018, there were more than 96,000 people released on their own recognizance. In 2020, that number is expected to dramatically increase. In response, The Liberty Fund will expand its services to include the ROR Case Management Program.

The target population for The Liberty Fund's new services will be low-income individuals charged with misdemeanor crimes who are released on their own recognizance (ROR). They must be willing and wanting to receive services, as well as needing housing and employment interventions. Services will be provided pretrial during the pendency of the case, which is typically 3 months.

"The beauty of our new ROR program," says Dave Long, Executive Director of The Liberty Fund, "is the simplicity of its proactive and practical design: *pretrial, voluntary, person-centered, and court-based*. We're responding right in the courthouse, with tangible and practical interventions, plus tackling the challenges of homelessness and unemployment that continually intersect with our criminal justice system."

The Liberty Fund's ROR Case Management Program features 4 key elements. First, services are pretrial so that interventions are initiated at the most critical touchpoint for success. Second, services are voluntary and non-mandated to ensure no additional sanctions or restrictions are placed on clients. Thirdly, services are person-centered and determined by the participant in order to better meet their individual needs, build trust and promote their buy-in to the interventions. And finally, services will primarily be court-based to engage clients during court appointments for effective time usage.

"The Liberty Fund involves a very unique partnership with the New York City Council, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, and The Doe Fund," explains George McDonald, president and founder of The Doe Fund,

NYC's leading agency in reducing recidivism and homelessness through workforce development, "The new ROR program is an excellent way to continue this dynamic partnership and our important criminal justice work in NYC."

"The New York City Council originally helped lead the launch of The Liberty Fund in 2016," agrees Corey Johnson, current Speaker of the NYC Council, "The ROR Program is a natural, logical next step in bail reform, and we are proud to be a part of it."

"The Liberty Fund's ROR Program will provide support to individuals prior to their court appearance," says Keith Powers, Chair of the Council's Criminal Justice Committee, "keeping New Yorkers on track with critical resources. I thank The Liberty Fund for its work with the City Council."

"NYC Council is enabling The Liberty Fund to begin immediately with the reforms," explains Rory Lancman, Chair of the Council's Committee on the Justice System, "Without any lag time, we will have initial results and data to enhance citywide implementation. It's all very exciting."

The innovation of The Liberty Fund's new services is robust case management that includes thorough intake and needs assessments in order to craft, in partnership with clients, individual action plans with social service referrals. All staff members are certified case managers which includes risk need responsiveness principles and trauma-informed care. Action plans will also include court-reminders, emergency needs (i.e. MetroCards, food vouchers, hygiene kits), and rap sheet counseling. Leveraging

its expertise in direct workforce development and homelessness interventions, The Liberty Fund will place clients in best-fit programs using an extensive citywide resource guide.

"Some of our clients face various barriers, including system mistrust," says Stan German, Executive Director of New York County Defender Services, "This initiative will help build rapport with clients while also guiding them toward personal success."

"The Liberty Fund meets a real need for pretrial services," says Marie Ndiaye, Supervising Attorney of Legal Aid's Decarceration Project, "We look forward to continuing to work with them through the new ROR Program."

The Council has financially supported The Liberty Fund since 2016, which has posted bail for nearly 1,000 men and women, all of whom could not afford their misdemeanor bail. The Council will now provide support for the new ROR program.

With funding from the New York City Council, The Liberty Fund will initially roll out the new ROR Program with sites in Manhattan and Brooklyn and hopes to further expand these services into the Bronx and Queens as additional funding is secured.

"We are honored to be a stabilizing factor on the ground as these monumental reforms unfold," continues Dave Long, "and we look forward to continuing to work with City Council in bringing equality of justice to all New Yorkers."

About The Liberty Fund

The Liberty Fund was established as part of a city-led strategy to reduce the people detained on bail for \$2,000 or less. Founded in part with The Doe Fund, New York City Council and the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, The Liberty Fund is New York City's first and only citywide charitable bail fund that covers night-time arraignments year-round. In January 2020, The Liberty Fund will expand to include individuals released on their own recognizance (ROR). In recognition of its important work, Mutual of America named The Liberty Fund as a Merit Finalist award recipient of its 2019 Community Partnership Award competition.

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