**Advocates Applaud State Task Force’s Call for a Health-Led Crisis Response**

**Urge Passage and Speedy Implementation of Daniel’s Law**

The [Daniel’s Law Coalition](https://www.danielslawny.org/) and its allies applauded the Daniel’s Law Task Force’s prioritization of a health-led response for community members in crisis that was contained in an extensive set of [recommendations](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___https:/omh.ny.gov/omhweb/daniels-law-task-force/dltf-final-report.pdf___.YXAzOm55YXByczphOm86MDViMjM1YTIxZmQ2MDBkMTU4YWMwZTExMGRmOTY3ODU6NzoyZjNkOmNjMDU5NDE3MDE3YzIzMGMzNTIxYzkyZGExZTQ2ODBiOTg2MTExNzJiYzE4MDdiNGRkNDAyYjdjYTlmZDkyYmY6aDpUOk4) that was released yesterday by the NYS Office of Mental Health.

“This approach will minimize the traditional reliance on law enforcement and shift towards a community-based response led by teams of trained mental health peer counselors and emergency medical technicians,” said Stanley Martin, a longtime leader of the Coalition that was formed in response to the tragic death of Daniel Prude in 2020.

“This is a significant policy shift that will keep our most vulnerable communities safe,” said Chacku Mathai, a Coalition member who serves on the Task Force. “We believe that if New York State had in place a health-led response for people experiencing a crisis, Daniel Prude, Win Rozario, and many others would still be alive today.”

“As a peer, a person living with a mental health condition, and a Daniel's Law Task Force member, I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the creation of a roadmap that is inclusive of peers in a public health response,” said Christina Sparrock. “Any New Yorker at any time can experience a crisis and should be met with care, not force. For this, I urge Governor Hochul and the Legislature to review the Daniel’s Law Task Force recommendations and implement them in 2025.”

Daniel Prude was killed in March 2020 in Rochester, New York, after being restrained by police during a mental health crisis, with officers placing a hood over his head and pinning him to the ground, leading to asphyxiation. Since then, the Coalition has worked to get legislation passed to ensure New Yorkers get the appropriate response when dealing with a mental health emergency.

The state formed Task Force was authorized by 2021 [legislation](https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/daniels-law-task-force/daniels-law-full-text.pdf) that was co-sponsored by Senator Samra Brouk and Assembly member Harry Bronson that that outlined how New Yorkers experiencing a mental health and/or substance use crisis “could be better served by a public health response that maximizes consent-based care and minimizes the role of law enforcement and the use of force against an individual.”

The Coalition believes that the following is necessary to effectively implement [Daniel’s Law:](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1T1jRmsSkTK3XmzlYMCrWuepwjHW_HDY-/view?pli=1)

* Evidence based Peer-led and EMT first responder teams based on a highly successful Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets ([CAHOOTS](https://whitebirdclinic.org/cahoots/)) model that was originated in 1970 in Eugene Oregon
* Expedite scaling of these recommendations to ensure every New Yorker has access to a health-led response
* Establish a sustainable funding stream to implement the legislation and the local teams
* Mandate timely and reliable health-led services regardless of the use of 911, 988, or other crisis lines

“Building on this recommendation of the state’s Task Force, we support the passage and full funding of Daniel’s Law (S2398/A2210)” Martin said.

The Coalition thanked NYS State Office of Mental Health Commissioner and Task Force chair Dr. Ann Sullivan and all the members of the Daniel’s Law Task Force for responding to the request of New Yorkers living with mental health and substance use challenges to produce the report well ahead of schedule.

The Coalition calls on the Governor and legislature to advance the work of the Task Force by making a commitment to establishing appropriate crisis response in the upcoming budget.

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**About the Daniel’s Law Coalition**

The Daniel’s Law Coalition seeks to pass legislation in New York State that would end our over-reliance on police as first responders to mental health and substance use crises. Daniel’s Law aims to provide better support and resources for individuals experiencing mental health crises by designating community-based teams as the first responders to mental health or substance use crises. These first responders will include those with lived mental health experience and/or lived experience with alcohol use or substance use disorders, as well as those already practicing trauma-informed mental health work in their communities, in addition to emergency medical technicians. Daniel’s Law would also create a statewide council of mental health experts to develop training and rules for all crisis calls and provide resources to mental health emergencies. These rules and training would be fully integrated into existing 988 and other emergency dispatch services.

**Members of the Coalition include:**

* Alliance for Rights and Recovery (formerly NYAPRS)
* Community Access
* Correct Crisis Intervention Today – NYC (CCIT-NYC)
* East Flatbush Village, Inc.
* Elders & Allies to Free The People - Rochester
* Fountain House
* Free The People - Rochester
* Friends of Recovery - New York
* Long Island United to Transform Policing and Community Safety
* New York Civil Liberties Union
* National Alliance on Mental Illness of New York State (NAMI-NYS)
* National Alliance on Mental Illness of New York City, Inc. (NAMI-NYC)
* National Alliance on Mental Illness - Queens/Nassau
* New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
* Partnership for the Public Good
* Public Issues Committee of the Long Island Council of Churches
* Rochester Alliance of Communities Transforming Society (ROCActs)
* Rochester City Wide Tenants Union
* Showing Up for Racial Justice - NYC
* Social Justice Committee of the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock
* The Supportive Housing Network of New York (SHNNY)
* VOICE Buffalo
* Voices Of Community Activists and Leaders - NY (VOCAL-NY)

The Coalition’s statement is supported by the following Allies:

* Mental Health Association in NYS
* InUnity Alliance
* Families Together in New York State
* NYS Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
* NYS Coalition for Children's Behavioral Health
* Association for Community Living