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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Legal Aid Demands Transparency from City on COVID-19 data at Rikers Island and other Local Jails

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society sent a [letter](#) today demanding greater transparency from the City on COVID-19 data from Rikers Island and other local jails. So far, the New York City Department of Correction (DOC) has failed to make data readily available for all New Yorkers to access. The public has little information on COVID-19 positive cases, the number of test administered, the number of incarcerated New Yorkers in quarantine, and other critical information.

Legal Aid urged the City to publically disclosure the following:

- (1) the number of staff and incarcerated people, reported separately, who have been tested and results reported for COVID-19;
- (2) the number of staff and incarcerated people, reported separately, who have been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- (3) the New York City jail facilities where people who have been tested and diagnosed are detained or work and come into contact with other people;

(4) the cumulative numbers of staff, and incarcerated people who were tested while in custody, including those who have since been released or transferred to another detention facility or hospital;

(5) the number of people in DOC custody currently in CHS care for COVID-19;

(6) the number of people in DOC custody who have been isolated or moved for observation for COVID-19;

(7) the number and location of people incarcerated by DOC who are being treated for COVID-19 in the hospital prison wards.

The letter states:

While there has been some information disclosed about the number of infections in New York City jails, there has been no disclosure of which facilities are impacted, or how daily life in the jails is different for staff, incarcerated people, and civilian workers.

The public has no reliable or timely data on numbers of people who have been tested, diagnosed. Or treated. The numbers we do have show that the New York City jails COVID-19 curve is skyrocketing, and without knowing when – or if – it will flatten puts our entire City at risk.

Our leaders insist that we are all in this together to fight COVID-19. But we can't truly address this problem as a community if we are left in the dark.

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. <https://www.legalaidnyc.org>