



May 3, 2020

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

***Legal Aid Condemns NYPD For Violent Social Distancing-Related Arrests
Yesterday In The East Village***

***LAS Calls On NYPD To Release The Names Of All Officers Involved And For
Their Immediate Discipline***

(NEW YORK, NY) – **The Legal Aid Society** condemned the New York City Police Department (NYPD) for conducting multiple violent social distancing-related arrests yesterday in the East Village. Two videos that recently surfaced [first](#) show officers - some without masks - approach a couple and, then, within seconds, escalate the situation by slamming one of the individuals, a young man, against a metal grate and arresting him. Officers then immediately threw the other individual - a young woman - to the ground and eventually arrested her. It is unclear what conversation, if any, the officers tried to hold with these individuals before using force and rushing to detain them.

The second video [captures](#) an officer, hurling a slew of expletives, aggressively approach another individual, apparently fire his taser, and then, with no apparent provocation, tackle and punch the individual multiple times, inflicting clear harm.

One of the believed officers involved - Francisco Garcia - has been sued seven times for misconduct, and six of those lawsuits have been settled for a combined \$182,500, according to [CAPstat](#).

“City Hall and the NYPD need to seriously reconsider social distancing enforcement that leads to escalations involving the use of tasers and violent assaults,” said **Tina Luongo, Attorney-in-Charge of the Criminal Defense Practice at The Legal Aid Society**. “What is equally disturbing is that some of these officers - who were ostensibly enforcing social distancing laws - were in violation of those same very laws themselves by not wearing protecting masks, endangering the lives of all New

Yorkers around them. We call on the NYPD to release the names of all these officers at once and call for their immediate discipline."

In the case *Medina v. City of New York*, The Legal Aid Society and Covington & Burling LLP are [challenging](#) the NYPD's practice of unlawfully deploying tasers against civilians who have shown no active aggression.

[Complaint](#)
[Exhibit D](#)

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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>