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

With Just 30 Days Left to Act, Legal Aid Calls on Albany to Amend New York’s Rent Relief Program to Serve More Families in Need or Lose \$60 Million in Funds for Tenants Back to Feds

(NEW YORK, NY) – **The Legal Aid Society** today called on Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature to act immediately to avoid the impending forfeiture of statewide rent relief program funds earmarked for New York tenants who are suffering COVID-19-related financial hardships. The state has until December 30, 2020 — just 30 days from today — to distribute the remaining [\\$60 million](#) to New Yorkers. Only \$40 million out of \$100 million in rent relief funds has been distributed so far, and only [15,020 out of 94,000](#) people who sought relief have been approved for the program.

A recent analysis by Legal Aid found that other states, including [Connecticut](#), [Delaware](#), [Maine](#), [Massachusetts](#), and [Washington State](#), amended their respective rent relief programs earlier this year to maximize the number of needy families eligible for relief. Albany so far has failed to do this.

“New Yorkers need rent relief now, and we are just 30 days away from forfeiting \$60 million back to the federal government if Albany fails to figure out how to get these funds to families facing eviction and homelessness,” said **Ellen Davidson, Staff Attorney in the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “Governor Cuomo and the Legislature created this problem, and the onus is now on them to make it right. This is not a blame game - people’s lives

are in the balance, and the situation becomes more dire with each passing moment that Albany fails to act."

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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. www.legalaidnyc.org