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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**Legal Aid Calls on State, City to Vaccinate Incarcerated New Yorkers Immediately**

(NEW YORK, NY) – Tina Luongo, Attorney-in-Charge of the Criminal Defense Practice at The Legal Aid Society, called on Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio to vaccinate incarcerated New Yorkers immediately as confirmed COVID-19 cases around New York State continue to skyrocket:

“New York State and New York City leaders are propagating COVID-19 by forcing thousands of people to live, work, eat and breathe close together in the congregate settings of jails and prisons, despite medical advice to decarcerate. Now, Governor Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio are pointing fingers over who is holding up providing the vaccine to people in this high-risk setting. This is a race against time, and there is no time for this incompetence. Both the State and City must ensure that all people held and working in New York City jails and New York prisons have access to the COVID vaccine immediately.”

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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](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)