

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

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

Statement in Response to Reporting that OCA has Suspended the White Family Court Clerk who Used Racial Slurs to Refer to a 15-Year-Old

(NEW YORK, NY) – Dawne Mitchell, Attorney-In-Charge of the Juvenile Rights Project at The Legal Aid Society, released the following statement in response to [reporting](#) in the *New York Law Journal* that the New York State Office of Court Administration (OCA) has suspended the white Family Court Clerk who used racial slurs to refer to a 15-year-old during a virtual court proceeding:

“We appreciate the New York State Office of Court Administration’s swift action to suspend the Family Court clerk who used racist and vile terms to refer to a 15-year-old who was appearing virtually before the court. This move signals a commitment to address this abhorrent behavior with a zero tolerance policy.

Young New Yorkers and their families who appear in Family Court, the overwhelming majority from communities of color, deserve dignified and respectful treatment from a system that too often fails to provide it.

We hope for OCA and all New Yorkers that this moment serves as an illuminating opportunity to understand and recognize the real and overt racial biases that impact our young clients every day in courthouses around New York City, as we all have a shared duty to root out this prejudice at its core.”

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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