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

***Legal Aid, Enterprise, Make the Road NY, RiseBoro, CAMBA,
and Robin Hood Foundation Launch Housing Helpline to
Assist Immigrant Renters with Legal Guidance and Access to
Rent Relief Upon Start of New State Emergency Rental
Assistance Program (ERAP)***

***New Know Your Rights Campaign Will Exclusively Serve
Undocumented and Mixed-Status Families, who were
Previously Excluded from the State's Rent Relief Program***

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society, Enterprise Community Partners, Make the Road New York, RiseBoro Community Partnership, CAMBA, and the Robin Hood Foundation today announced the launch of a new Know Your Rights campaign, a collaborative effort funded by the Robin Hood Foundation that will raise awareness of immigrant tenants' rights to stay in their homes, despite financial hardship or immigration status, and of the resources available to support them.

As part of the campaign, the organizations have launched a new [housing helpline](tel:212-298-3490) — 212-298-3490 — for immigrant families seeking legal assistance and referrals to financial resources available through programs including [New York State Emergency Rental Assistance Program \(ERAP\)](#) and [FASTEN \(Funds & Services for Tenants Experiencing Need\)](#). The helpline will serve exclusively undocumented and mixed-status families, who were previously excluded from earlier versions of the state’s rent relief program, and will provide tenants with access to legal support and guidance on their application for rental relief so that they can prevent eviction and remain in their homes. The helpline will also assist New York’s noncitizen and undocumented renters in accessing up-to-date information on basic and COVID-19-related housing rights and protections.

The campaign will also offer trainings for people and organizations serving their New York City communities, to ensure they are disseminating the latest information on housing rights and available resources for vulnerable tenants. Moreover, the Know Your Rights partners will launch a robust Public Service Announcement and marketing campaign to ensure that undocumented households know of these resources and know where to access help.

New York City has also contracted with organizations in every borough who can assist both tenants and landlords in completing applications for ERAP. The full list of community-based organizations by county can be found here: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/help-applying/>.

Resources available to tenants to help them remain housed include:

- [New York State Emergency Rental Assistance Program \(ERAP\)](#), which provides rental arrears, temporary rental assistance, and utility arrears assistance to low and moderate-income households at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Tenants can apply for funds through <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/emergency-rental-assistance/>
- [FASTEN \(Funds & Services for Tenants Experiencing Need\)](#), which provides services and disburses aid across New York City to reach populations in urgent need of eviction prevention services, including rental assistance, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition to direct rental arrears assistance grants, FASTEN helps clients to stabilize holistically with additional resources, including landlord mediation and legal assistance; food relief, affordable health services and utility arrears assistance; access to financial counseling and job search assistance; and other service referrals. Impacted tenants can access FASTEN assistance by contacting a [community-based provider based on their zip code](#).

“We are proud to be launching a new helpline for immigrant families—who were previously excluded from earlier iterations of the state’s rent relief program—and are particularly vulnerable to landlord harassment and informal eviction tactics, including threats around the disclosure of immigration status,” said **Judith Goldiner, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “We expect the application process to be somewhat complicated and potentially confusing for many members of our client communities, and we look forward to providing direct assistance to New Yorkers to ensure their housing stability.”

“It’s imperative that New Yorkers at risk of eviction know their rights, as well as the resources available to help them. We applaud our government leaders for ensuring that much-needed federal relief funds are available to New York’s undocumented communities through New York’s newly opened aid portal as well as through FASTEN,” said **Michelle Mulcahy, Director, Public Housing and Vulnerable Populations, Enterprise Community Partners**. “Now, we must take additional steps to raise awareness of these resources so that communities with the highest barriers to accessing aid can receive it. We are proud to back this vital campaign supporting undocumented families and want to thank The Legal Aid Society, Make The Road New York, RiseBoro, CAMBA, and the Robin Hood Foundation for their partnership to bring these resources to life.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic brought disproportionate job losses to the immigrant community in New York City, putting families at risk of losing their homes,” said **Sarah Oltmans, the Robin Hood Foundation’s Chief of Grant Strategy**. “As we look to rebuild a new New York, Robin Hood is humbled to support the housing hotline and Know Your Rights campaign to ensure that our immigrant neighbors can access the funding and benefits they are eligible for.”

Jennie Stephens-Romero, Supervising Attorney at Make the Road New York, said, “Immigrant communities have been the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, and have until now been largely excluded from assistance. This program allows us to reach some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers to ensure they remain housed during this precarious time.”

“I am proud to live in a city where immigration status is not an impediment to eligibility for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program,” said **Mirtha Santana, Chief Program Officer of RiseBoro Community Partnership**. “Now that the program is rolling out, we will spread the word through this Know Your Rights campaign.”

“CAMBA is proud to be a part of this campaign to help immigrant New Yorkers in need,” said **Melissa Mowery, Vice President of CAMBA's HomeBase program**. “The ripple effects of the pandemic will continue to impact the most vulnerable in our communities for months and years to come. By reaching those who are on the verge of losing their housing, we can ensure that individuals and families can receive the referrals, advice and help right when they need it most.”

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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 145 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.

Enterprise Community Partners is a national nonprofit on a mission to make home and community places of pride, power and belonging for all. To make that possible, we operate the only organization designed to address America's affordable housing crisis from every angle: we develop and deploy programs and support community organizations on the ground; we advocate for policy on a nonpartisan basis at every level of government; we invest capital to build and preserve rental homes people can afford; and we own, operate and provide resident services for affordable communities. All so that people not only make rent, they build futures. With this end-to-end approach, 40 years of experience and thousands of local partners, Enterprise has built and preserved 793,000 homes, invested \$61 billion in communities and changed millions of lives. Join us at www.EnterpriseCommunity.org.

Robin Hood has been fighting poverty in New York City since 1988. Because Robin Hood's board covers all overhead, 100% of every donation goes directly to the poverty fight. Last year, Robin Hood awarded \$172 million in grants, filling a critical void during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing cash assistance, meals, housing, healthcare, education, and other urgent needs to one million New Yorkers impacted by COVID-19, as well as funding an array of programs and initiatives developed to elevate families out of poverty in New York City. Learn more at www.robinhood.org.

Make the Road New York (MRNY) builds the power of immigrant and working class communities to achieve dignity and justice through organizing, policy innovation, transformative education, and survival services. We have 24,000+ members and operate five community centers in Bushwick, Brooklyn; Jackson Heights, Queens; Port Richmond, Staten Island; Brentwood, Long Island; and White Plains, Westchester County. www.maketheroadny.org.

Since 1973, RiseBoro Community Partnership has offered services designed to support every generation and meet the needs of communities. Our unique model of holistic community revitalization works by developing neighborhood assets, like affordable housing, to create the foundation for a more vibrant and diverse community. We build upon this foundation with programs designed to connect people to resources to help everyone in the community thrive, especially our most vulnerable populations. This inclusive approach helps unleash the potential

of the community and ensures that nobody is left behind in times of growth. Please visit www.riseboro.org for more information about our programs.

Started in 1977, CAMBA is a nonprofit agency that connects people with opportunities to enhance their quality of life. CAMBA offers integrated services and programs in: Economic Development, Education & Youth Development, Family Support, Health, Housing and Legal Services. CAMBA serves more than 65,000 individuals and families, including 10,000 youth, each year. Learn more about CAMBA's life-changing services at www.camba.org.