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

Legal Aid Calls on NYS to Release Information on Emergency Rental Assistance Program Applicants to Ensure That Vulnerable Communities Have Applied for Relief

(NEW YORK, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society** called on the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to release information - including zip code and income level data - on tenants who have applied for Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) funding to discern whether outreach efforts have worked and to ensure that vulnerable New Yorkers who are eligible to apply have done so. Legal Aid further urged OTDA to release its outreach plan, targets and whether OTDA has achieved those targets, as the success of ERAP depends on a model that effectively reaches communities in need throughout the State.

“New York State has billions of dollars in rental assistance ready to disburse to families in need, and we need to know that vulnerable communities are aware of ERAP and successfully applying,” said **Judith Goldiner, Attorney-In-Charge of the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “As such, we demand that OTDA release income and zip code level data, which will help discern this. New York must avoid a situation, similar to the one that arose in the administration of the COVID-19 vaccination, where some communities jumped the line ahead in those with the greatest need.”

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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 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