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Contact:

Redmond Haskins
Director of Media Relations
The Legal Aid Society
rhaskins@legal-aid.org
(929) 441-2384

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

Joint Statement from Legal Aid, Coalition for the Homeless in Response to Reporting that the City is Close to Finalizing a Contract with Norwegian Cruise Line to Shelter Asylum Seekers

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society and Coalition for the Homeless issued the following statement in response to [reporting](#) that the City is close to finalizing a contract with Norwegian Cruise Line to shelter asylum seekers:

“As we’ve previously stated, cruise ships are not designed or equipped to provide adequate shelter and services to homeless people, particularly those with disabilities. Furthermore, ventilation within the close quarters of a cruise ship is inadequate to protect people from airborne infectious diseases like COVID-19 and tuberculosis.

Given the limited number of spaces in New York City where a cruise ship could dock, we’re especially concerned with individuals’ and families’ ability to access jobs, health care, schools, childcare, legal assistance, community-based services, and other critical resources.

The Adams Administration should instead take action to bolster shelter capacity by transitioning New Yorkers, including those who have languished in shelters for years, into permanent housing by reducing red tape and increasing access to local housing vouchers such as CityFHEPS, as we have detailed in our recommendations to them.

Although we oppose the plan of placing asylum seekers on a cruise ship, the City has assured us that they will comply with all applicable rules and court orders, which means that clients can enter the Department of Homeless Services shelter system if they decline a shelter option that is not in compliance with the relevant court orders, such as the Orchard Beach tent facility or a cruise ship. We look forward to reviewing a plan to ensure that this remains the case with any new sites that come online, including potential cruise ships.”

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