

# THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Justice in Every Borough.

December 17, 2022

Contact:

Redmond Haskins  
Director of Media Relations  
The Legal Aid Society  
[rhaskins@legal-aid.org](mailto:rhaskins@legal-aid.org)

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

## ***Legal Aid Calls on Governor Hochul to Sign Historic Statewide Legislation to Permit Certain Homeless and Runaway Youth the Right to Consent to Their Own Healthcare***

(NEW YORK, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society** called on Governor Hochul to sign critical legislation ([S.8937/A.9604](#)) which would allow decisionally-capable homeless youth, as well as runaway and homeless youth who receive services at an approved runaway and homeless youth crisis services program or a transitional independent living support program, to consent to their own health care, including gender affirming care. In fact, LGBTQ+ youth are much more likely to experience homelessness than their straight and cisgender peers, and this legislation will enable them to access much needed health care.

Last night, S.8937/A.9604 was transmitted to the Governor for action.

Timely treatment and preventative care are critical for young people's health and well-being, and enable them to excel in school and beyond. For too long, homeless and runaway youth have been unable to access any health care in New York unless or until their situation becomes critical. This is because they do not have parents available to consent to care for them, and because homeless and runaway youth service providers are not legal guardians and cannot consent for their care.

“Homeless and runaway youth are some of our state’s most vulnerable New Yorkers, and this legislation would bridge a critical gap that oftentimes prevents young people from taking command of their own healthcare when circumstances preclude their parents or guardians from acting on their behalf,” said **Heidi Bramson, staff attorney in the Health Law Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “The Legal Aid Society lauds the New York State Senate and New York State Assembly for advancing this measure, and we call on Governor Hochul to sign it into law at once.”

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