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

***FOIL: NYCHA Utility Outages Still Plague Residents Citywide***

***Housing Advocates Call on Washington, Albany, and City Hall to Appropriate Significant Funding to Address Longstanding Public Housing Capital Needs***

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society released documents today obtained via a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request which reveals that utility outages - heat, hot water, and water - continue to plague New York City Public Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents citywide.

For the last heat season, which lasted from October 1, 2021, to May 31, 2022, utility outages totaled 3,605 compared to 2,872 from the previous heat season, which stretched from October 1, 2020, to May 31, 2021, an increase of 733 outages.

<b>Outages</b>	<b>2020 - 2021</b>	<b>2021- 2022</b>
No Heat	584	772
No Hot Water	1,686	1,965
No Water	602	868
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>3,605</b>

FOIL results for 2021 – 2022 heat season: <https://tinyurl.com/mrx73pty>.

FOIL results for 2020 – 2021 heat season: <https://tinyurl.com/nhenth2e>.

“While NYCHA has made some improvements to mitigate utility outages, residents still [suffer](#) lapses in service on a daily basis,” said **Judith Goldiner, attorney-in-charge of the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “This moment demands greater attention from Washington, Albany, and City Hall, and we call on President Biden, Governor Hochul and Mayor Adams to allocate significant funding to address NYCHA’s capital needs, which is now tens of billions of dollars and growing each and every day.”

**Background**

Per New York City and State law, NYCHA, serving as the landlord, is [obligated](#) to establish and maintain certain housing standards. Under the City’s Housing Maintenance Code (HMC), heat must be provided between October

1 and May 31 when temperatures fall below certain degrees. Moreover, the New York State Multiple Dwelling Law requires owners to provide both hot and cold water 24 hours a day.

The Legal Aid Society, elected officials, and others have argued that NYCHA should issue rent abatements to tenants during outages, per the Housing Authority's legal obligation as the landlord.

In 2018, Legal Aid and Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP filed a [class action lawsuit](#), *Diamond v. New York City Housing Authority*, demanding that the Authority issue rent abatements to residents who went without heat and hot water during the 2017 to 2018 "heat season" and, in particular, during the winter cold spell that lasted from December 27, 2017 – January 16, 2018. This lawsuit is currently pending in the New York State Court of Appeals, First Department.

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