

March 17, 2023

Contact:

Redmond Haskins  
Director of Media Relations  
The Legal Aid Society  
929.441.2384  
[rhaskins@legal-aid.org](mailto:rhaskins@legal-aid.org)

**\*\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY\*\*\***

***Public Defenders, Civil Legal Service Providers, and Elected Officials Hold Press Conference to Demand Fair Funding in the City Budget***

**WHAT:** New York's leading public defender and civil legal service providers will hold a press conference to demand fair funding in the City's Fiscal Year 2024 budget. The organizations will publicly share their collective funding demands, while highlighting the impact of chronic underfunding and contracting issues. These issues have undermined their ability to retain staff and meet their legal mandates to provide critical and life-saving services to the city's most vulnerable New Yorkers.

**WHERE:** Steps of City Hall

**WHEN:** Monday March 20, 2023 at 9:00 AM

**WHO:** The Legal Aid Society, Legal Services NYC, New York Legal Assistance Group, The Bronx Defenders, Brooklyn Defender Services, New York County Defender Services, Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, Queens Defenders, Council Member Shaun Abreu, Council Member Kevin Riley, Council Member Tiffany Caban and others

**MEDIA:** Arrive at 8:45AM. Pre-rally interviews upon prior request. Mic podium available.

**Background**

As the cost of living in New York City continues to rise, thousands more New Yorkers will be threatened by eviction, job loss, food insecurity, incarceration, family separation, and deportation. New York's leading public defender and civil legal service providers are often the first line of defense for New Yorkers struggling to survive.

Yet, these organizations have faced years of chronic underfunding, contracting issues, and unfulfilled commitments to provide pay parity and supplements to meet the demands of historic legislative reforms. These failures have led to widespread staff vacancies and delayed investments in critical infrastructure, like technology.

If left unaddressed, not only will staff attrition levels continue to rise, but low-income New Yorkers will be further harmed — marginalized and disconnected from the critical services these organizations provide to keep them in their homes, with their families, and in their communities — services that ensure true community safety.

###