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

Joint Statement from Legal Aid, Coalition for the Homeless in Response to the City Failing to Ensure Shelter for New Arrivals

Hundreds of New Arrivals Forced to Languish in Freezing Cold, Many Overnight, on Sidewalk Outside of East Village Reticketing Site

(NEW YORK, NY) – **The Legal Aid Society and the Coalition for the Homeless** issued the following joint statement in response to the City failing to provide shelter for new arrivals, including hundreds of single adults who were forced to languish, many overnight, on the sidewalk outside of the East Village reticketing site:

“Denying new arrivals shelter has resulted in dozens of people sleeping on sidewalks awaiting placement and exposed to 20-degree weather, an egregious breach of the City’s legal and moral obligation to provide shelter in a timely fashion to anyone in need.

“The troubling and unnecessary scene at the East Village reticketing site is reminiscent of the deplorable conditions that our clients were forced to endure in the sweltering heat outside of the Roosevelt Hotel this past summer - one which drew international shock - and the City must immediately rectify this situation without further delay.

“But the general public should know that if the City, supported by the State, prevails in their effort to gut Right to Shelter protections, these scenes will become commonplace throughout our city - a reality no New Yorker wants to see.

“Should the City continue to flout long-standing court orders and laws, we will seek judicial intervention to protect our clients’ safety and well-being.”

The full list of proposals that Legal Aid and the Coalition for the Homeless have submitted to the City and State to bolster shelter capacity:

- implementing effective case management services at all new arrival shelter sites that will enable people to move out of shelter earlier and reduce the need for shelter capacity;
- implementing a real resettlement program to connect people with communities in need of new residents;
- utilizing federal properties outside of New York City that the federal government has offered for shelter capacity;
- making use of State properties outside of New York City that could be used for shelter capacity;
- making use of all available properties in New York City that could be used for shelter capacity;
- addressing the need for additional rental assistance and homeless prevention efforts to avert and abbreviate shelter stays for New Yorkers, which would reduce the need for shelter for New Yorkers and free up existing shelter capacity to address the immediate humanitarian crisis;
- providing adequate staffing in City offices and programs that new arrivals and longer-term New Yorkers alike rely on to exit shelter;
- supporting the full implementation of the recently passed reforms to CityFHEPS;
- spending funds already appropriated through the nearly \$200 million in New York State's Rent Supplement Program to move long-staying families who are currently residing in New York City Department of Homelessness' shelters to permanent housing;
- rebuilding the New York City Commission on Human Rights' Income Discrimination Unit to hold landlords, real estate agents, and brokerage agents accountable for unlawfully denying placements to housing voucher holders; and
- expanding the City's shelter capacity by not canceling or delaying planned shelter openings.

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