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## ***Legal Aid Files Source of Income Discrimination Lawsuit Against NYC Landlords Who Failed to Authorize Critical Section 8 Vouchers Needed to Keep Tenants Housed***

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society filed a [lawsuit](#) against 14 different landlords and management companies on behalf of [12 New York City tenants](#) who were at risk of losing their homes due to the repeated refusal of the landlords to submit the necessary information and documents required to authorize their Section 8 vouchers on November 8, 2023. The vouchers, which the tenants received through the New York City Housing Authority's Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program, provide critical subsidies to tenants who cannot otherwise afford to pay their rent in full.

The complaint alleges that, along with refusing to take the initial steps to allow the tenants to use their vouchers, many of the landlords and management companies have also sought to evict the plaintiffs based on nonpayment of rent — rent the defendants would be receiving had they not failed to submit the information and documents required to begin the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) EHV approval process.

The complaint alleges that the landlords' refusal to accept the plaintiffs' EHV's violates prohibitions against source of income discrimination contained in the New York State and New York City Human Rights Laws. Failing or refusing to submit the forms required to accept a voucher is illegal.

Vincent Puccio, who currently resides in a co-op unit in Brooklyn managed by Superior Realty Group LLC, received his housing voucher in March 2023. In July 2023, after no action had been taken by the owner to submit the required paperwork on his behalf, Mr. Puccio spoke to a representative of the owner about his voucher. In response, according to the complaint, the representative stated "it was not going to happen." Additionally, representatives of the owner have repeatedly stated that they have had issues while trying to submit the paperwork, despite Mr. Puccio's attorney walking them through the process over a series of emails in June 2023. As of January 2024 — ten months after he requested to use his voucher — no paperwork has been filed.

Since its filing, the case has had an impact: landlords for eight of the twelve tenants have taken steps to accept their tenants' vouchers: 2069 Realty LLC; 161-171 Morningside LLC; Galil Management LLC; Dufferin Associates, LLC; Kings Thorn LLC; Diego Beekman MHA HDFC; Salvatore Passalacqua; Joseph Passalacqua; AEF Woodside LLC; and 1075 Gerard Ave. LLC. Settlement negotiations with Anufa Properties LLC are also

ongoing. The claims against 161-171 Morningside LLC and Galil Management LLC have been discontinued, and all other tenants hope to obtain a positive resolution of their claims against their landlords.

“Despite source of income discrimination laws that have existed for nearly two decades, NYC landlords continue to ignore legal requirements and refuse to promptly accept housing vouchers and cooperate with the voucher process. As a result, many voucher holders lose or are at risk of losing their vouchers, including these tenants,” said **Evan Henley, an attorney with The Legal Aid Society’s Civil Practice**. “New Yorkers have a right to use housing vouchers to remain safely and stably housed, and no tenant should be punished due to the careless inaction of their landlord.”

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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. <https://www.legalaidnyc.org>*