



Justice in Every Borough.

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

***Statement in Response to the Adams Administration Reducing Cash Assistance,
SNAP Benefit Application Backlogs***

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society released the following statement in response to the Adams Administration [reducing](#) the cash assistance and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit application backlogs:

“Following a court injunction issued last August that set a March 2024 deadline for the City to come into full compliance with the law, we are very pleased that the Adams Administration was able to correct the egregious backlog of applications filed by low-income New Yorkers for these life-saving benefits.

“Going forward, we will continue to hold the City accountable for any processing delays that adversely impact our clients. Lastly, we await further details from the City on how the backlog was reduced to ensure that any eligible household received the benefits entitled to them by the law.”

Background

In January 2023, Legal Aid, New York Legal Assistance Group and Dechert LLP [filed *Forest et al v. the City of New York et al*](#), a class action lawsuit [against](#) the New York City Department of Social Services (DSS) and Human Resources Administration (HRA) for failing to process applications and recertification for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and cash assistance — both essential forms of federal and state benefits for low-income people used for the purchase of food and other basic needs — within the 30-day timeframe required by federal and state law.

This past August, a court issued a decision which required the DSS and the HRA to come in full compliance with all federal and state processing requirements for SNAP and cash assistance applications and recertifications, and eliminate the backlog of delays by March 2024.

The court order also included a series of benchmarks and monitoring requirements that will be used to ensure that the City comes into full compliance. Additionally, the City is required to provide monthly reports that will be used to assess their progress.

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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