

March 23, 2024

Contact:

Redmond Haskins
Director of Media Relations
The Legal Aid Society
rhaskins@legal-aid.org
929.441.2384

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VIDEO: Tenants of 1915 Billingsley Terrace - Bronx Building that Partially Collapsed Last December - Report Rainfall Pouring into the Lobby Through the Ceiling Lights

Residents Fear for Another Collapse or Electrical Fire

Attorneys Call on the City to Immediately Assess if Building is Safe and Structurally Sound for Residents

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society - as attorneys representing the residents of 1915 Billingsley Terrace, the Bronx building that [partially collapsed](#) on December 11, 2023 - released a video this afternoon showing rainfall pouring through ceiling lights in the building’s lobby. Tenants are now concerned that this could lead to another collapse or an electrical fire. Tenants on the sixth floor also report that they are experiencing severe flooding.

“The tenants of 1915 Billingsley Terrace have already suffered enough, and we are concerned that today’s rainfall, which is pouring through ceiling lights in the lobby, has compromised the building’s integrity and placed the tenants in harm’s way,” said **Jessica Bellinder, Supervising Attorney with the Housing Justice Unit - Group Advocacy at The Legal Aid Society**. “We need the landlord, the City, and the FDNY to immediately assess 1915 Billingsley Terrace to determine if it’s safe and structurally sound for residents.”

Video: <https://youtu.be/YV1kS8LkZcI>

Background:

On February 5, 2024, The Legal Aid Society filed a [lawsuit](#) against the landlords of 1915 Billingsley Terrace seeking immediate repairs to over 144 housing violations, more than half of which are classified as hazardous. The litigation also seeks to lift a partial vacate order to allow displaced tenants to return to their homes, force the landlords to rebuild the collapsed section of the building, and restore units to their original layouts and square footage. Since filing the case the [HPD violations have increased to 208](#), while additional inspections are needed.

The lawsuit was filed against landlords David Kleiner, Yonah Roth, 1915 Realty LLC, and Moishe “Mo” Doe, along with the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB), the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH).

The dangerous conditions include an outage of cooking gas to the entire building, harmful construction and lead dust in common areas, an overall lack of janitorial services in the building, and infestations of cockroaches, rats, and mice in common areas and inside individual apartments.

Moreover, the landlords have engaged in blatantly illegal behavior that has harassed and endangered the tenants by forcing them to sign agreements stipulating that the conditions in their apartments were fully repaired, despite the deplorable conditions, in exchange for receiving the keys to their apartments.

The landlords have also failed to provide adequate security for the building. Despite the vacated units allegedly having been secured by the landlord, when the tenants returned to their apartments, they found that looters had gained access to the units and had robbed tenants’ personal belongings. The tenants reported the looting directly to the landlord and filed police reports.

Prior to the partial collapse in December 2023, the landlords had been put on notice since at least 2014 that the façade of the building was “unsafe” and in violation of the law. A DOB filing described “cracked brick, vertical cracks at sills and water tables, loose and damaged mortar, a slightly bowed section of parapet and cracks at the parapet interior.”

Where to donate: <https://give.thebronx.org/give/547184/#!/donation/checkout>

The work of The Legal Aid Society’s Citywide Housing Justice Unit – Group Advocacy is supported by the City’s Human Resource Administration (HRA).

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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