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Legal Aid Files 7A Lawsuit Against Food First Seeking the Appointment of Private Administrator to Run Building After Years of Neglect and Mismanagement by the Supportive Housing Landlord

(BROOKLYN, NY) — The Legal Aid Society today [filed](#) an Article 7A [lawsuit](#) – which allows tenants, or the City, to ask the court to appoint a private administrator to manage residential buildings that have been “effectively abandoned” and neglected by their owners – on behalf of 7 tenants residing at 201 Pulaski Street in Brooklyn.

The lawsuit was filed against Food First Housing Development Fund Company, Inc. – headed by Alfred Thompson and managed by Valentina Gojcaj of Onesource Property Management Services, Inc. – a nonprofit that claims to provide supportive housing for the homeless and working poor. Food First owns several apartment buildings throughout NYC.

Food First has a long history of neglect by allowing building conditions to become dangerous to the life, health and safety of the tenants who live there. The conditions at 201 Pulaski include, but are not limited to, vermin infestations, persistent roof leaks, inadequate heat, and inadequate janitorial services. Food First has failed to complete any significant repairs or construction on any of the tenants’ homes, and continues to harass them by depriving them of basic services.

“Our clients and all tenants at 201 Pulaski have suffered years of dangerous living conditions as a result of Food First completely ignoring their duty as landlord to address the disrepair issues,” said **Linda Holmes, Staff Attorney in the Housing Brooklyn Neighborhood Office at The Legal Aid Society**. “Food First has made it clear that, left to their own devices, they will continue to neglect and mismanage this building, so the tenants have been left with no choice but to seek intervention from the court. We look forward to fighting on their behalf.”

This is the third lawsuit brought by the Pulaski tenants against Food First. The first HP action was filed on April 30, 2019 and sought repairs for several violations issued by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). Food First failed to make those repairs despite a court order to correct the outstanding HPD violations, and was found in contempt of court.

On May 1, 2023, tenants brought the second HP proceeding seeking repairs; the trial is still underway in that proceeding. However, during the pendency of this 2023 HP proceeding, violations have increased from 57 to 166 total violations.

Food First currently has an outstanding tax bill of \$91,580.05 due to the NYC Department of Finance, and outstanding charges of \$17,205.75 owed to HPD.

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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 140 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>