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May 20, 2024

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

Legal Aid Files Amicus Brief in Pending Appellate Case In Support of Plaintiff's Right to Record in Public Spaces of Police Precincts

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society has filed an [amicus brief](#) in [Reyes v. City of New York](#), a pending case in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, in support of the plaintiff's right to record in public spaces of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) precincts. The [New York State](#) and [New York City](#) Right to Record Act unambiguously codify a broad right to record the police with very limited and specific exceptions, none of which exempt police precincts.

Reyes was filed in July 2023 in the U.S. District Court Southern District of New York after the plaintiff was arrested twice for filming in public areas of NYPD precincts. The District Court held that the NYPD's blanket ban on recording in police precincts likely violated the Right to Record Acts and granted a preliminary injunction to stop the NYPD from prohibiting such recordings in their precincts.

Legal Aid's amicus brief provides additional information and context, including recent examples of people being harassed and unlawfully arrested when attempting to use precincts as intended, such as to retrieve property or file a missing object report, illustrating the public's interest in recording their interactions with police officers in precinct lobbies. These stories show how the NYPD's blanket ban on recording in precincts harms that interest.

"The right to record the police is critical to law enforcement transparency and accountability. Police precincts are one of the most significant contact points between the public and the NYPD, and filming within the public spaces of those precincts serves a myriad of purposes, including proof of complaints or to record police misconduct," said **Shona Hemmady, attorney in the Special Litigation Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. "When members of the public are denied services or even assaulted in precinct lobbies, the video recordings may serve as their only proof to hold the responsible officers accountable."

In 2016, Legal Aid brought *An v. City of New York* to challenge the NYPD's widespread practice of interfering with people who record the police in public by blocking their cameras, ordering them to stop recording, or arresting them. As part of the *An* settlement, the NYPD agreed to issue a revised patrol guide section regarding the public's right to record police activity and train its staff on that right.

Additionally, in 2020, Legal Aid, in coalition with Communities United for Police Reform, advocated for the passage of the New York State and New York City Right to Record Acts to protect New Yorkers who record police activities.

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