

December 18, 2024

Contact:

Alejandra Lopez  
The Legal Aid Society  
[ailopez@legal-aid.org](mailto:ailopez@legal-aid.org)

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

***Legal Aid Statement on New Report by the Governor’s Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council Highlighting the Need for Substantial Increases in Cash Assistance, Which Has Not Been Raised in over a Decade***

(NEW YORK, NY) -- The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement in response to a [report](#) released today by Governor Hochul’s [Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council](#) which sets out recommendations for achieving the goal of reducing child poverty in New York State by 50 percent, in accordance with the Child Poverty Reduction Act. Legal Aid serves on the Public Benefits Committee advising the Council.

Among a small package of crucial recommendations in the report, the Council highlights the need to increase assistance levels for the Cash Assistance program. The part of the program that provides assistance for basic needs, like diapers, soap, and laundry detergent, has not been increased since 2012. Under the current levels, a mother and child receive just \$291.50 a month to meet all their basic needs.

**Adriene Holder, Chief Attorney of The Legal Aid Society’s Civil Practice, said:**

“It is shameful that the lowest-income families in New York, those who are eligible for Cash Assistance, have not received increases to the aid they receive in over a decade despite record inflation. Updating the program levels is a policy choice, and the failure to do so would leave our clients in a state of deep poverty, perpetually scrambling to make ends meet with the little assistance they receive.

“The lack of funding disproportionately impacts Black and Latinx families, with child poverty among New York State children of color approaching [30 percent](#) and Black children more than twice as likely to live in poverty than their Non-Hispanic White peers.

“We welcome Governor Hochul’s pledge to put ‘money in people’s pockets,’ but she must go beyond tax rebates, and heed the recommendation of her Child Poverty Reduction Council by increasing Cash Assistance in the new State budget. By taking this long overdue step, she will help the lowest-income families move past economic hardship, stabilize financially, and create long-term healthy, thriving communities.”

###

*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 nearly 150 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>*