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

***Legal Aid Statement on the Death of Former Client Jonathan Grant at Auburn
C.F.***

***Attorneys Condemn Ongoing Correctional Workers' Strike, Which Has Severely
Impacted Incarcerated New Yorkers' Access to Medication, Food, Counsel, Legal
Mail, Programming, Family Visitation, and Essential Services***

***Recent Memo Suspending HALT Provisions Erodes Key Protections for
Incarcerated People Against the Harmful Effects of Solitary Confinement***

(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement on the death of former client Jonathan Grant at Auburn Correctional Facility, the ongoing correctional workers' strike affecting over 40 prisons across New York State, and the recent suspension of certain provisions of the Humane Alternatives to Long-Term Solitary Confinement (HALT) law:

“We mourn the loss of former client Jonathan Grant and call on the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) to ensure that Mr. Grant’s family and community receive the answers they need and deserve regarding his passing. According to [reporting](#), Mr. Grant had been unwell, and his requests for medical assistance in the days and hours leading up to his death were ignored. This tragic incident highlights the dangers posed by the ongoing strike, as staff in over 40 prisons refuse to fulfill their duties.

“Since the strike began, Legal Aid has received dozens of reports from incarcerated clients across New York State about their inability to access critical medical care and essential prescriptions, including blood pressure medication and necessary insulin shots. The people we serve are not receiving adequate food, family visitation, tablets, sanitary supplies, programming, recreational time, commissary, or other essential services. Additionally, several facilities have been without hot water or heat. The lockdown has also restricted our clients’ ability to communicate with their attorneys through legal calls and attend scheduled court and parole hearings.

“Furthermore, the memo recently issued by DOCCS Commissioner Daniel F. Martuscello III, suspending the HALT Solitary Confinement Act, is an unacceptable response. The Department does not have the legal authority to suspend the law, which provides essential protections for incarcerated New Yorkers from the harmful effects of solitary confinement.

“We are monitoring this situation closely and will continue to advocate for the incarcerated people we represent, ensuring their safety and well-being in New York State’s custody.”

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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 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. www.legalaidnyc.org