

April 4, 2025

Contact:

[Press@legal-aid.org](mailto:Press@legal-aid.org)

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

## ***Legal Aid Calls for Investigation into NYPD's Community Response Team's Violations of Body-Worn Camera Policies***

(NEW YORK, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society**, in a recently issued [letter](#), [called](#) on the Office of the Inspector General for the New York City Police Department (NYPD) to investigate serious violations of the Department's body-worn camera policies. In said letter sent to Inspector General Jeanene Barrett, Legal Aid outlined multiple violations by the NYPD's Community Response Team (CRT), which was first [reported](#) last month, including the improper storage of footage, the failure to disclose evidence in criminal cases, unauthorized access to live body-camera feeds, and officers' repeated failure to activate cameras in a timely manner.

"The NYPD has violated its body-worn camera policies in ways that severely undermine transparency, accountability, and the criminal legal system," said **Laura Moraff, Staff Attorney in the Digital Forensics Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. "By withholding video evidence from defendants, concealing footage from NYPD's lawyers, and granting potentially unauthorized individuals—including the Mayor—access to live feeds, the NYPD has not only broken the public's trust but has also violated the law. We demand a full investigation into these violations and immediate corrective action."

Among the key findings outlined in the letter:

- **Unlawful Withholding of Evidence:** The CRT's body-worn camera footage was stored outside the NYPD's primary database, leaving prosecutors, defense attorneys, and courts unaware of its existence. As a result, CRT footage was not disclosed in criminal cases, and defendants were deprived of the right to inspect evidence related to their cases. .
- **Lack of Transparency and Oversight:** The NYPD's failure to disclose the separate storage of CRT footage likely led to incomplete responses to Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests and compromised public access to critical police footage.
- **Unauthorized Livestreaming:** Reports indicate that potentially unauthorized individuals, including the Mayor, were granted access to live body-worn camera feeds, a practice not disclosed in NYPD's publicly available surveillance policies.

- **Failure to Activate Cameras:** A 2023 audit revealed that CRT officers frequently turned on their body-worn cameras too late, failing to capture full incidents in violation of NYPD policy.

Legal Aid is urging the Office of the Inspector General to conduct a full investigation and ensure that these violations are included in the NYPD's next annual audit under the Public Oversight of Surveillance Technology (POST) Act (Local Law 65 of 2020).

###

*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](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)*