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

## ***Statement on Adams Administration Reopening the ICE Office at Rikers Island***

**(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society** issued the following statement in response to the Adams Administration reopening the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) office at Rikers Island, a clear violation of New York City’s sanctuary laws:

“Granting ICE access to Rikers Island, a facility where New Yorkers—including noncitizens entitled to a fair trial and the presumption of innocence—are detained, is a severe breach of New York City’s sanctuary city principles and undermines essential constitutional due process rights that apply to all individuals, regardless of immigration status.

“Instead of standing with and protecting our immigrant neighbors, Mayor Adams continues to support the new Administration’s cruel immigration policies, which have escalated in recent weeks.

“Make no mistake, policies such as this executive order will have a chilling effect throughout the city, undermining public safety—which the Mayor purports to prioritize above all else—by deterring noncitizens from seeking help or cooperating with law enforcement for fear of deportation.

“Additionally, in light of the federal government’s misuse of the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 to deport Venezuelan asylum seekers to a prison in El Salvador—based solely on the government’s assertion that Venezuelans over the age of 14 are members of the Tren de Aragua gang—Mayor Adams is creating a pipeline for the federal government to expel these individuals to El Salvador.

“We are considering all of our options—including litigation—to protect the people and communities we serve.”

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