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Legal Aid and City Council Win Appeal to Force Adams Administration to Implement CityFHEPS Reform and Expansion Laws

Appeals Ruling Orders Mayor to Submit Council's Subsidy Expansion to State for Approval

(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society today [won an appeal](#) in the class action lawsuit, [Marie Vincent et. al. v. Mayor Eric Adams et. al.](#) The appellate court unanimously reversed a lower court's ruling and will force Mayor Eric Adams and the City to begin implementation of a package of legislation that reforms and expands the City Fighting Homelessness and Eviction Prevention Supplement (CityFHEPS) program, a local housing voucher for New Yorkers on the brink of or experiencing homelessness.

The Court's order directs the Adams administration to present the City Council's subsidy expansion package for approval by the State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the first step in making the expanded subsidies a reality for vulnerable New Yorkers. The ruling also reaffirms the City Council's role in continuing to define social services policies – a role that Mayor Adams sought to deny.

The lawsuit was initially filed on February 14, 2024, on behalf of New Yorkers who would be eligible for CityFHEPS under the new laws but who were barred – until now – from accessing the rent subsidy because the Adams Administration had refused to implement the reforms.

“Today's unanimous appellate decision is a critical moment for thousands of New Yorkers struggling with housing insecurity,” said **Robert Desir, Staff Attorney in the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society**. “This ruling reinforces the City Council's authority to implement policies that provide much-needed relief to vulnerable residents, ensuring they can remain in and access stable housing. At a time when affordability remains one of the most pressing challenges in New York City, this decision marks a significant step toward a housing system that is accessible and fair for all.”

“We call on the Mayor to act with the urgency this issue demands and to expeditiously seek State approval for these essential subsidies. We further urge the State to approve the expansion promptly to prevent thousands of additional, needless evictions,” Desir added.

The Court's order directs the Mayor to submit a plan to State OTDA incorporating the following laws:

- [Local Law 99 of 2023](#), which permits voucher holders to lease apartments for the full voucher amount without having to first deduct utility expenses, placing CityFHEPS families on par with Section 8 voucher holders;

- [Local Law 100 of 2023](#), which increases income eligibility from 200 percent of the poverty line to 50 percent of area median income to expand access to more New Yorkers in need;
- [Local Law 101 of 2023](#), which expands eligibility for CityFHEPS to any income eligible household at risk of eviction;
- [Local Law 102 of 2023](#), which precludes the City from basing eligibility on employment status.

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The Legal Aid Society is a nonprofit organization that 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.

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