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

Legal Aid Statement on the Creation of a Mayoral Office of Community Safety

(NEW YORK, NY) — The Legal Aid Society released the following statement on Mayor Zohran Mamdani [creating](#) a Mayoral Office of Community Safety:

“We commend Mayor Mamdani for establishing an Office of Community Safety, a critical step toward reforming a system that has long relied too heavily on criminalization and incarceration to respond to New Yorkers in crisis. For too long, the criminal legal system has also failed to address the underlying issues and lack of community-based resources that result in people interacting with law enforcement.

“Every year, thousands of New Yorkers experiencing the crises of homelessness, mental health challenges, and substance misuse are not connected with the support and resources they need. These individuals – who are disproportionately low-income people of color – are met with force from New York City Police Department (NYPD) officers that oftentimes leads to avoidable arrests or, in dire cases, [injury](#) or [death](#).

“The Office of Community Safety must direct the long overdue work that requires de-escalation of these crises and reduces overall harm by diverting responses from NYPD officers to peer-led teams with expertise in addressing mental health, substance use, and access to housing.

“We likewise welcome the appointment of Renita Francois as the Deputy Mayor for Community Safety and look forward to working together in the coming weeks and months to achieve a more humane and effective approach to public safety. Her appointment marks a commitment to addressing the root causes of violence and engaging with the most impacted communities through means other than force.

“As we commemorate our 150th year of serving New Yorkers, The Legal Aid Society remains committed to partnering with Mayor Mamdani, Deputy Mayor Francois, and our leaders in City Hall to ensure this Office is fully equipped with the funding and resources necessary to deliver real, lasting change for the New Yorkers who need it most.”

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The Legal Aid Society is a nonprofit law firm 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 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 the people we serve and helps improve our communities.

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