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Legal Aid Secures Landmark Settlement Requiring Supportive Housing Provider CAMBA to Take Steps to Prevent Evictions of Tenants Facing Rent Arrears

Agreement establishes robust protections for supportive housing tenants and reinforces citywide standards requiring providers to pursue alternatives to eviction before seeking to remove tenants from their homes

(NEW YORK, NY) — The Legal Aid Society today announced a landmark [settlement agreement](#) requiring supportive housing provider CAMBA, Inc. to adopt new procedures designed to prevent the avoidable eviction of tenants experiencing rent arrears and to ensure that tenants have meaningful opportunities to access financial assistance before losing their homes. For low-income New Yorkers with disabilities, supportive housing is often a critical lifeline. Losing that housing can return tenants to homelessness, destabilize their health and lives, and undermine the very purpose of a system designed to provide long-term housing stability.

The settlement resolves a federal [lawsuit](#) brought by three CAMBA supportive housing tenants who alleged that CAMBA and its affiliate, CHV 560 Winthrop Street LP, failed to provide reasonable accommodations that would have enabled them to remain in their homes without facing the risk of eviction and homelessness. The lawsuit alleged violations of the Fair Housing Act, New York State Human Rights Law, and New York City Human Rights Law.

“Supportive housing is supposed to be a foundation for stability—not another pathway back into homelessness,” said **Maddie Reichman, Staff Attorney in the Civil Law Reform Unit of The Legal Aid Society**. “Our clients should not lose their homes because a rent arrears problem was never given a meaningful opportunity to be resolved. This settlement requires CAMBA to put housing stability first by connecting tenants to available assistance and exhausting reasonable alternatives before seeking to evict them. We appreciate CAMBA’s cooperation in resolving this matter, and hope this agreement serves as a model for supportive housing providers across New York City.”

Under the agreement, CAMBA must implement a comprehensive protocol governing how it responds to rent arrears and nonpayment proceedings involving its supportive housing tenants. Among other requirements, CAMBA is required to:

- Offer tenants assistance with financial management and applications for rent-arrears assistance, including New York City Human Resources Administration “One Shot Deal” applications, after a rent demand is served and after a nonpayment case is filed;
- Refrain from commencing nonpayment proceedings against tenants who are actively cooperating with efforts to obtain rental assistance;
- Exhaust reasonable alternatives to eviction—including payment plans, One Shot Deal applications, and subsidy assistance—before its attorneys may seek a warrant of eviction;
- Require its attorneys to confirm with CAMBA social-services staff that those alternatives have been exhausted and that the tenant is not cooperating with efforts to obtain assistance before seeking a warrant;
- Require the same confirmation before directing a marshal to execute an eviction warrant;
- Train CAMBA social-services staff on the new requirements and the City’s supportive housing eviction-prevention guidance; and
- Provide Legal Aid with regular reports concerning nonpayment cases involving CAMBA supportive housing tenants, allowing for ongoing monitoring of compliance.

The settlement comes as New York City continues to expand its supportive housing system, which provides permanent, affordable housing and services to tens of thousands of New Yorkers who have experienced homelessness. More than [37,000 units](#) of congregate supportive housing have been created since the 1980s and nearly 100 nonprofit providers exist across the five boroughs.

Yet tenants can still face eviction for rent arrears, even when rental assistance or other interventions could resolve the problem. For people who have already experienced homelessness, losing supportive housing can mean losing not only a home, but the stability and services that help them remain housed. The City’s new Housing Stability and Eviction Prevention Guidance for Supportive Housing Providers recognizes these risks and calls on providers to identify problems early, connect tenants with assistance, and pursue alternatives to eviction whenever possible.

The CAMBA settlement puts these principles into a concrete, enforceable process. While the agreement applies directly to CAMBA and its supportive housing tenants, it offers a model for supportive housing providers across New York City to ensure that tenants have meaningful access to rental assistance and other interventions before eviction becomes the default response to arrears. For low-income New Yorkers, these protections can mean the difference between remaining safely and stably housed and returning to homelessness.

The settlement requires CAMBA to implement the new procedures within three months of execution of the agreement and provides for 15 months of monitoring and enforcement by Legal Aid.

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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 our clients and helps improve our communities.

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