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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Legal Aid Society Responds to DOI Report on NYPD's Use of Facial Recognition Technology

(NEW YORK, NY) — The Legal Aid Society issued the following statement in response to a new report from the New York City Department of Investigation's Office of the Inspector General for the NYPD (OIG) exposing risk of misuse, biased policing, discrimination and civil rights violations in the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) policies and uses of facial recognition technology following concerns Legal Aid first brought to OIG in 2025:

"This report confirms what The Legal Aid Society has been warning for years: the NYPD's procurement and use of facial recognition technology disregards constitutional protections and creates foreseeable harm. After we raised concerns about NYPD practices contributing to false arrests, particularly for Black New Yorkers, the Inspector General uncovered even more causes for concern, including the NYPD's consistent failure to train investigators to operate the facial recognition software they use to surveil New Yorkers.

"These findings raise serious concerns about the use of facial recognition technology in NYPD investigations and subsequent prosecutions, as well as the opaque role of the NYPD's facial recognition technology vendors in surveilling New Yorkers. Yet police and prosecutors continue to withhold critical information about its use and shield the investigators conducting these searches from scrutiny by courts, the City Council, and the public. We call for a ban on the NYPD's procurement and use of facial recognition technology to protect New Yorkers' privacy in public spaces and prevent false accusations and arrest."

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The Legal Aid Society is a nonprofit law firm with one simple yet powerful purpose: 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. www.legalaidnyc.org