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

***Legal Aid, Coalition for the Homeless Announce Settlement in Callahan v. Carey, Preserving NYC's Right to Shelter***

***Settlement Protects the Right to Shelter for Anyone in Need***

***City Agrees to Eliminate Backlog of New Arrivals Who Are Reapplying for Shelter, End Use of Waiting Rooms as Shelter***

**(NEW YORK, NY) – The Legal Aid Society and the Coalition for the Homeless**, following a court-supervised mediation led by New York State Supreme Court Judge Gerald Lebovits, announced a settlement with the City to end the government's legal challenge to New York's long-standing Right to Shelter for single adults, established under *Callahan v. Carey* in 1981.

The terms of the settlement are temporary, as they will only operate during the current humanitarian crisis and apply only to new arrivals who are single adults. The agreement preserves the underlying 1981 Right to Shelter consent decree and prevents the government from automatically denying shelter to any group of people if they have no other place to go. It guarantees the Right to Shelter for anyone - longer-term New Yorkers and new arrivals alike - while ensuring the City's compliance with multiple court orders and existing law.

The settlement consists of a temporary crisis plan that takes effect immediately and lasts only until the current humanitarian crisis ends. The terms of the settlement are enforceable in court. The underlying Right to Shelter consent decree has not been modified.

In addition to ensuring new arrivals' access to shelter, the settlement guarantees that:

- all single adult new arrivals receive an initial 30-day shelter placement (60 days for single adults under the age of 23) if they do not have another place to stay;
- all single adult new arrivals will have their basic needs met as they move toward independence and resettlement;
- the City will eliminate the backlog of new arrivals who are reapplying for placement;

- the City will counsel new arrivals in their preferred language on what assistance is available to help them resettle;
- the City will extend shelter stays beyond 30 or 60 days for single adult new arrivals for a period of time on an individualized, case-by-case basis as long as they are making diligent efforts to locate a place to stay outside of the shelter system;
- the City will offer extended placement beyond 30 or 60 days for any single adult new arrival with a disability, in accordance with federal, state and local laws;
- at New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelters, Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief Centers (HERRCs), hotels throughout New York State, and faith-based or community-based accommodations, the following will be provided to all single adult new arrivals:
  - an appropriate number of staff based on an assessment of the needs of each site; and
  - access to bathrooms, showers, and meals (or a meal allowance).

The settlement also requires the elimination of the use of “waiting rooms” as shelter. Recently, many new arrivals have waited for days or weeks on chairs and floors when they reapplied for shelter at the “Reticketing Center” after their initial 30-day shelter placements.

“This settlement safeguards the right to shelter in the consent decree, ensuring single adults’ - both long-time New Yorkers and new arrivals - access to shelter, basic necessities and case management to transition from shelter to housing in the community. It also requires the City to immediately eliminate the use of waiting rooms as shelters where new arrivals have been sleeping on chairs and floors while they wait for shelter placement,” said **Adriene Holder, Chief Attorney of the Civil Practice at The Legal Aid Society**. “We will very closely monitor the City’s compliance with this settlement and we won’t hesitate to seek judicial intervention should there be noncompliance.”

“For more than 40 years, New York’s legal Right to Shelter has distinguished our city as a community that demands basic standards of decency and humanity for anyone in need, and so we are relieved that this settlement finally puts an end to Mayor Adams’ efforts to dismantle this lifesaving cornerstone of New York’s response to homelessness,” said **David Giffen, Executive Director of the Coalition for the Homeless**. “We will vigorously monitor compliance to ensure that those without homes are not relegated to the streets, and look forward to the Mayor and Governor significantly increasing their efforts to help homeless longer-term New Yorkers and new arrivals alike transition from shelters into permanent housing and stability.”

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