



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

Forwarding: Legal Aid Society's Statement in Support of COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program

BRIAN KAVANAGH March 1, 2021

| ISSUE: **COVID-19 EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM , HOUSING, TENANTS, RENT
RELIEF, LANDLORDS**

| COMMITTEE: **HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**



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

As NY Courts Resume Eviction Proceedings, Legal Aid Implores Albany Lawmakers to Enact The COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program of 2021

(NEW YORK, NY) – **Judith Goldiner, Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Law Reform Unit at The Legal Aid Society**, released the following statement calling on Albany to immediately enact the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program of 2021 ([S2742B/A3918](#)) now that New York's 60-day blanket eviction moratorium expired on Friday, February 26, 2021. Only New Yorkers who have submitted a [hardship declaration](#) are now protected against eviction.

"Now that new and pending eviction cases are moving forward in housing court, it is imperative that the Governor Andrew Cuomo and the Legislature enact the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program of 2021 to provide robust rental and utility payment assistance to eligible New Yorkers who are on the brink of losing their homes. While tenants across New York can and should continue to submit Hardship Declaration forms to pause their eviction cases, the low rate of submissions underscores the critical need to pass this legislation.

As we begin the recovery phase of the pandemic, it is in the public interest to keep New Yorkers in their homes and to avoid homelessness. The State must invest in and help stabilize the communities that have been hit the hardest by COVID-19 if we are to truly recover."

**If you have experienced financial hardship or face significant health risk because of COVID-19, you cannot be evicted at least until May 1, 2021. However, in order to receive protection, you must notify your landlord, the local eviction court, or both. This form will help you automatically send notice to your landlord and the court that you are eligible for

protections.

You may access the Tenant's Declaration of Hardship During the COVID-19 Pandemic here:

<https://www.housingjusticeforall.org/tenants-declaration-form>

To get help or to see if you qualify for free legal assistance in a housing matter, call the Legal Aid housing helpline, Tuesdays only from 9 am- 5pm at 212-298-3333, or call a Legal Aid neighborhood office in your borough:

Manhattan: 212-426-3000

Brooklyn: 718-722-3100

Bronx: 718-991-4600

Queens: 718-286-2450

Staten Island: 347-422-5333

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 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.

www.legalaidnyc.org