Julia Rosner, Senior Staff Attorney at Legal Services NYC, the nation's largest provider of free civil legal services, issues the following statement on the federal stimulus package the president is expected to sign today amid the COVID-19 pandemic:

New York, N.Y., March 27, 2020 - "The unprecedented expansion of unemployment insurance included in the federal government's proposed stimulus package will go a long way in helping desperate unemployed workers meet their basic needs, especially here in New York where unemployment benefits lag behind other states. The federal package provides an extra $600 a week on top of the regular weekly unemployment benefit rate, which would provide stability to low-income workers who, for example, might only receive $250 a week in unemployment insurance which is not enough to pay the rent, put food on the table, and pay bills. The package, which provides an additional 20 weeks of unemployment insurance to New Yorkers, should be implemented as quickly as possible so people can get the relief they need now.

The federal package also includes an entire class of employees excluded here in New York—"independent contractors. In addition, many workers are misclassified as independent contractors and have tremendous difficulty accessing unemployment insurance. Today’s package will provide much needed relief to thousands of misclassified workers and independent contractors across the state."

For more information or to speak to an expert who can further put the impact of this stimulus package into context, please contact Yasmina Dardari at ydardari@lsnyc.org or (646) 442-2064.

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