Court Says #Sandy Evacuees Can Stay In Hotels Until Mid-May

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A Manhattan judge has ruled that hundreds of Sandy evacuees currently living in hotel rooms paid for by the city can stay until at least mid-May.

After meeting with attorneys in chambers for almost 30 minutes, Judge Margaret Chan announced today that the 365 Sandy evacuees with no current housing alternatives can stay in the hotel rooms until May 15.

The city had said they would be evicted from the hotels on April 30, after funding for the program ended.

Attorneys for the city said that they planned on extending the deadline to the same date regardless of how the judge would have ruled today.

The city's Law Department said that the city had spent close to $60 million on helping households transition into stable living arrangements. Department of Homeless Services Commissioner Seth Diamond told reporters last week that the hotel program had cost the city $40 million.

"We are gratified" the Law Department's Thomas Crain wrote in a statement late today, "that the court has agreed to hear and decide the matter promptly. We believe the court will ultimately find that the city's response has been completely proper."

Yesterday, the city argued that a temporary restraining order was filed without proper notification . The city said that it did not review the filing until late in the evening. Attorneys from the Legal Aid Society, which is representing five of the

Sandy evacuees in the case, said that they gave the city notice on Tuesday morning.

The city argues that the city has provided more than enough resources for all Sandy evacuees that used the hotel program, including those have been unable to secure housing after the intially planned eviction date at the end of April.

The judge said she would hear oral arguments in the case on May 13.

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