January 30, 2020, NEW YORK, NY – Today, Legal Services NYC (LSNYC) announces that Michelle Burrell began as the new Project Director of Queens Legal Services, a program of Legal Services NYC.

Queens Legal Services provides high-quality free civil legal services to thousands of low-income Queens residents each year, helping families to fight evictions and maintain affordable housing, fight predatory deed thefts, avoid deportation, maintain income and access to fair wages, secure benefits and food security, and protect the rights of vulnerable people across the borough, including LGBTQ communities, survivors of domestic violence, and communities of color.

"For over a decade, Michelle has dedicated her career to protecting New York City's most vulnerable children and families, and we are beyond thrilled to have her lead Queens Legal Services," said Raun Rasmussen, Executive Director of Legal Services NYC, which includes Queens Legal Services. "Michelle's work for the communities she serves is driven by a deep sense of justice, from empowering survivors of domestic violence with legal protections to stay safe to leveling the playing field for low-income parents fighting to keep their families together. Michelle's legal expertise and approach to leadership are impressive, and we are excited to welcome her vision of racial and economic justice to Queens Legal Services."

"In Michelle, we believe we have found the right person to lead Queens Legal Services to new heights, said Mark A. Robertson, board chair of Queens Legal Services and partner at Norton Rose Fullbright US LLP. "We welcome her and look forward to working with her to continue providing high-quality legal services to Queens residents in need."

Ms. Burrell began her career as a Staff Attorney at Legal Services NYC's Brooklyn Family Defense Practice. She then became a staff attorney in the Matrimonial & Family Law Unit at New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) where she represented litigants in matrimonial, custody, visitation and family offense cases. She comes back to Legal Services NYC from the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem (NDS) where she was the Managing Attorney of the Family Defense Practice. In that role, she managed a staff of attorneys, social workers, parent advocates and paralegals that provide legal representation to indigent parents and family caregivers who have been accused of abuse and neglect in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City. She is a graduate of the University of Ottawa and CUNY School of Law, where she was a member of the Black Law Students Association and a member of the Law Review.

"It is an honor to return to Legal Services NYC, where I began my legal career," said Michelle Burrell, Project Director at Queens Legal Services, a program of Legal Services NYC. "Joining Queens Legal Services, which serves the most ethnically diverse urban community in the country through an array of civil legal services, is an incredible opportunity to both champion the amazing individuals who provide support and advocacy to the borough's most vulnerable populations and to work to dismantle the interlocking systems of oppression that impact our neighbors and friends."

For more information on Queens Legal Services, visit https://www.legalservicesnyc.org/queens.

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