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

***Statement on Appointment of Calliana S. Thomas as the Director of the New York State Office of Gun Violence Prevention***

**(NEW YORK, NY) - The Legal Aid Society** issued the following statement in response to the appointment of Calliana S. Thomas as the Director of the New York State Office of Gun Violence Prevention:

“We welcome the appointment of Calliana S. Thomas to lead the New York State Office of Gun Violence Prevention. We hope that Ms. Thomas prioritizes and targets the root cause of gun and gang violence, and the continuous work of the New York City Mayor’s Office Crisis Management System (CMS), a model that has proven and secured results in reducing gun and gang violence in the five boroughs.

Legal Aid’s Community Justice Unit (CJU) and CMS partners continue to work in impacted communities daily to reduce gang and gun violence. However, with the expansion of the CMS partner sites and the demand for legal and social services, there is a greater need for funding resources from Washington, Albany, and City Hall.

We look forward to working with Ms. Johnson to continue expanding the critical CMS programming across New York City to serve more New Yorkers and more neighborhoods.”

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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 145 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](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)*