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Contact:

Redmond Haskins
Director of Media Relations
The Legal Aid Society
rhaskins@legal-aid.org
(929) 441-2384

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

***Statement from Legal Aid in Response to Reporting on Integrity Issues Involving
Four Criminalists at the NYC Office of the Chief Medical Examiner***

***Attorneys Demand Answers, Full Accounting of All Past and Present Criminal
Casework Involving These Four Criminalists***

(NEW YORK, NY) – Jenny S. Cheung, Supervising Attorney of the DNA Unit at The Legal Aid Society, issued the following statement in response to [reporting](#) on integrity issues involving four criminalists at the New York City Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME):

“All evidence gathered from a crime scene for DNA testing at OCME includes many criminalists who are involved in testing, generating profiles that tremendously impact the trajectory of a criminal case. Given these egregious integrity issues, OCME should review every single criminal case - both closed and pending - that involve the four criminalists in question. Through this investigation, we expect OCME to proactively keep all criminal legal system stakeholders aware of their findings and of any additional improprieties, should they emerge.”

Background

Yesterday, area public and appellate defender offices received notice from local prosecutors that three OCME criminalists had been removed from performing laboratory and casework activities as a result of an ongoing investigation into integrity issues associated with case reporting. An additional criminalist was also removed from certain duties due to integrity issues relating to timesheet records.

This comes only one week after area public defenders, appellate attorneys and advocates issued a [letter](#) to five New York City prosecutor offices [calling](#) for a full, transparent, and independent audit of the New York City Police Department’s (NYPD) Latent Print Section following a [near-decade delay](#) by the Section to formally disclose that one of its fingerprint examiners erroneously matched an individual’s fingerprint to a crime scene fingerprint back in 2015 while two other examiners verified the misidentification.

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