



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT APPOINTS ACTING CORPORATION COUNSEL**

*Celia Meza, the Mayor's Counsel and Senior Ethics Advisor, will step into City's top legal role*

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot announced today that Celia Meza, an experienced litigator and public servant, will serve as Acting Corporation Counsel effective immediately, becoming the first Latina to ever hold this position.

“While we undergo our search for a new Corporation Counsel, I have appointed Celia Meza to serve in that role in an acting capacity,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Celia is someone who I have known for over 20 years. We have worked closely since the start of my administration in her function as Mayor’s Counsel and Senior Ethics Advisor – a new role created specifically when I came into office. Over the past 18 months, she has been at the forefront of our efforts to implement our legal and ethics policies and reforms and I have the utmost confidence that she will extend our values of equity, transparency, and accountability that are needed. Most importantly, Celia will work to mend the trust that has been breached among Chicago’s communities during this painful moment.”

In her current role as Mayor’s Counsel and Senior Ethics Advisor, Ms. Meza serves as the Mayor’s direct legal advisor, providing advice and counsel to the Mayor on City operations and policy matters. In addition, she advises the Mayor’s Office senior staff on ethics, compliance, and administrative operations.

“As someone who has built their career on providing ethics and compliance counsel in both the public and private sectors, it is an honor to serve in this position and one that I do not take lightly,” said Ms. Meza. “In this new role, I look forward to leading the City’s Law Department during a pivotal transition to not only review and assess its practices but chart an equitable path forward.”

Ms. Meza has a diverse government background having worked in federal, state and local legal positions including serving as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Chicago U.S. Attorney’s Office, and Deputy Inspector General of Investigations for the City’s Office of Inspector General.



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This marks a return for Ms. Meza to the City's Law Department, as she previously served as the Deputy Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago's Law Department in the Employment Litigation Division from 2007 to 2009. In that role, she managed the Employment Litigation Division staff in the defense of federal and state employment lawsuits and counseled departments on employee disciplinary matters. Prior to that, from 1995 to 2000, she served in the City's Law Department in the Labor & Municipal Prosecutions Divisions representing City departments in labor arbitrations, personnel board and administrative agency hearings, and prepared initial responses and position statements to EEOC filed complaints while in the Labor Division. Additionally, in this role she prosecuted municipal ordinance violations and building code violations.

Celia is a graduate of the University of Illinois – Urbana Champaign and the University of Iowa College of Law. She was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1994.

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