



NEW YORK CITY LAW DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL

Michael A. Cardozo, *Corporation Counsel*

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

**CELESTE KOELEVELD,
TOP LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CRIMINAL EXPERT,
JOINS LAW DEPARTMENT AS
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC SAFETY**

KOELEVELD ARRIVES FROM U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, WHERE SHE SUPERVISED OVER 160 ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEYS IN ALL ASPECTS OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION; NEW LAW DEPARTMENT ROLE WILL FOCUS ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND POLICE ISSUES

New York, July 18, 2008 – Celeste Koeleveld, a leading legal expert who in her previous role at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York focused on law enforcement and criminal investigations, joined the Law Department this week as its new Executive Assistant Corporation Counsel for Public Safety. Her arrival enhances the Law Department's internal expertise in police and federal matters.

In her role, Koeleveld will be part of the Law Department's Executive Staff and will oversee the 70-attorney Special Federal Litigation Division (which handles federal police and correction officer litigation) and the 100-attorney Family Court Division (which deals with juvenile prosecution and plays a critical role in promoting the well-being of the City's children).

"We are delighted that an attorney of Celeste Koeleveld's stature and prominence has joined the Law Department," noted Michael Cardozo, the Law Department's Corporation Counsel. "She is a consummate professional who combines a unique blend of criminal and extensive federal trial experience with the ability to manage large legal teams dealing with major matters."

Cardozo added, "The Executive Assistant for Public Safety role is one of the most pivotal positions at the Law Department. Celeste's experience will dovetail perfectly with many of our key initiatives, especially in dealing with the growing number of complicated cases in the post 9/11 world challenging police conduct and security measures. Moreover, Celeste's academic achievements are outstanding as is her devotion to public service, and she has the keen ability to use her academic strengths in resolving real-world problems."

Koeleveld graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard University in 1986 with a concentration in government. She received her J.D. from Columbia University School of Law in 1989. Asked to amplify on her interest in government, Koeleveld noted: "I was always fascinated with the inner workings of society and how it is organized. My intrigue with political science meshed perfectly with my ultimate career goal – which was always to be an attorney."

After clerking for then-U.S. District Judge Kenneth Conboy of the Southern District of New York, Koeleveld joined the U.S. Attorney's Office in 1991. While there, she served as Chief of the Criminal Division, supervising over 160 Assistant U.S. Attorneys in all aspects of criminal investigation and prosecution. Most recently, Koeleveld was Chief Appellate Attorney, responsible for all criminal briefs filed by the office in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. She worked closely with the Solicitor General's Office on appellate issues and provided extensive legal advice to other Assistant U.S. Attorneys regarding matters of trial and investigative strategy. Koeleveld also served as Chief of General

Crimes, among other roles, where she supervised first-year attorneys and was responsible for the “General Crimes Lecture Series,” which covered topics ranging from arrest procedures and search warrants to indictments, evidence and appeals.

Before becoming a supervisor, Koeleveld handled cases involving organized crime, narcotics trafficking, bribery and corruption in unions, and violent gangs. She prosecuted a myriad of high-profile cases, including a Federal racketeering scheme – dubbed “Mobstock” by the press and lawyers on the case – involving members of the Bonanno and Genovese crime families. In that case, several alleged mob figures pled guilty to conspiring to bribe brokers at a small Wall Street brokerage house, Meyers Pollock Robbins, to sell stock of a company called HealthTech to unsuspecting investors.

In Koeleveld’s “spare time,” she shares her knowledge with future attorneys. For the past three years, she has been an adjunct professor at Columbia Law School teaching legal research, writing and appellate advocacy to first-year students. “Teaching gives me the opportunity to give back and share my knowledge and experience,” Koeleveld said. “I wanted to continue my relationship with my *alma mater*, connect with students and provide mentoring to a new generation of lawyers.”

Last year, the New York City Bar Association named Koeleveld a winner of the Henry L. Stimson Award (presented to outstanding assistant U.S. attorneys in the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York, from both the criminal and civil divisions). In 1999, she was also honored with the Attorney General’s Award for Distinguished Service.

Koeleveld is married to Paul B. Haskel, a partner at the New York law firm of Richards Kibbe & Orbe. She has three children and lives in Manhattan.

“I look forward to serving local government,” she added. “It is exciting to be such an integral part of the City in which you live.”

Koeleveld replaces former Special Counsel Gail Donoghue, who retired from the Law Department in late May after 21 years.

The New York City Law Department is one of the oldest, largest and most dynamic law offices in the world, ranking among the top three largest law offices in New York City and the top three largest public law offices in the country. Tracing its roots back to the 1600’s, the Department has an active caseload of 90,000 matters and transactions in 17 legal divisions. The Corporation Counsel heads the Law Department and acts as legal counsel for the Mayor, elected officials, the City and all its agencies. The Department’s 690 attorneys represent the City on a vast array of civil litigation, legislative and legal issues and in the criminal prosecution of juveniles. For more information, please visit nyc.gov/law.

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