



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 8, 2020

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES NEW MOPD COMMISSIONER AND CPS
INSPECTOR GENERAL TO JOIN ADMINISTRATION**

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced two key hires to join her administration - Rachel Arfa as Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) and William Fletcher as Inspector General for Chicago Public Schools (CPS). An extensive search was conducted for both roles and candidates with diverse backgrounds and experiences were considered. Both appointees will serve vital roles in the administration, as they will assist in the execution and advancement of Mayor Lightfoot's vision for a more equitable, accessible and transparent city.

Rachel Arfa, MOPD Commissioner

Rachel Arfa is a passionate advocate for accessibility in the nation's political and legal systems, as well as cultural spaces, and she brings decades of experience to this role both defending and supporting people with disabilities. Before her appointment to serve as the Commissioner for MOPD, Rachel was a staff attorney at Equip for Equality for nearly a decade representing clients with disabilities in employment discrimination and civil rights violations. In her role, Rachel was the Project Manager for the Illinois ADA Project, which provides information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to businesses, advocates, and individuals. Rachel is the President of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Bar Association and in December 2019, made the motion using spoken language and ASL for 10 deaf and hard of hearing attorneys to be admitted to the United States Supreme Court Bar. Rachel serves on the Board of Directors for the Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium Steering Committee and the Board of Directors for 3Arts, which supports artists of color, women artists, and artists with disabilities. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan (B.A.) and the University of Wisconsin School of Law (J.D.).

"Chicago's disability community is one of our city's largest and most diverse, and I am thrilled to have Rachel take the helm of MOPD and lay the groundwork to tackle



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



Chicago’s next frontier of disability issues,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Our mission is simple. We want to make Chicago the most inclusive and accessible city in the nation. Period. No exceptions. That means being a city where everyone belongs, where everyone has something to offer, and where everyone’s God-given gifts are supported and expressed. Rachel’s experience and passion make her ideally suited to lead that effort, and Chicago should be proud to have her on our side.”

The Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities promotes accessibility and equal opportunity for people with disabilities across Chicago. The MOPD Commissioner advises the Mayor and leads the City’s agenda on disability policy and accessibility matters with the goal of creating high-impact, measurable systemic changes that help position Chicago to be the most accessible city in the nation. The Commissioner oversees direct disability services, training, legal compliance, policy, and legislative initiatives, as well as actively engages with the disability community.

“As a Chicago native and deaf female attorney who has dedicated my career advocating on behalf of people with disabilities, I’m extremely proud to be serving in Mayor Lightfoot’s cabinet as the Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities. People like me who experience disability live in every one of Chicago’s 77 neighborhoods. We are from all races and ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, and sexual orientations. We all deserve equal rights and resources so that we can fully participate in our city’s economic and social fabric including in the areas of employment, housing, civic engagement, and the arts. I look forward to working with all Chicagoans with disabilities – whether those disabilities are visible, invisible or acquired – so they can access the vital services that connect them to Chicago’s vibrant communities.” said Rachel Arfa.

William Fletcher, CPS Inspector General

Will Fletcher brings years of experience to this role as he has served in Inspector General offices throughout the City of Chicago, helping organizations realize and achieve their compliance goals through internal investigations, policy implementation, audits and reviews. Before his appointment to serve as the Inspector General for CPS, Will worked at the Chicago Park District Office of Inspector General (CPD-OIG) as the Inspector General for five years, and at the Office of the Chicago Public Schools Inspector General (CPS-IG) in the role of Deputy Inspector General. He served as the President of the Illinois Chapter of the Association of Inspectors General from 2016-2020, and he is a Board Member of the National Association of Inspectors General. He is a graduate of Whitney M. Young Magnet High School, Northwestern University (B.S.) and Columbia University Law School (J.D.).



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



“The CPS Office of Inspector General serves a critical role for our entire city, but especially for our students, whose lives and futures we are all responsible for,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “As a graduate of Chicago Public Schools himself, Will brings not only years of experience and training critical to the role, but a personal perspective that will enrich his judgement and fuel his own passion to his mandate of ensuring all of us are held accountable to the same standard of care and excellence.”

The Office of the Chicago Public Schools Inspector General conducts highly confidential and sensitive investigations and audits. The Inspector General leads all efforts to investigate plans and programs to control and prevent illegal or improper practices, and maintains case records, prepares reports and briefs, analyzes specific data gathered as a result of investigations, and makes recommendations for action to the Chicago Board of Education.

“I am honored that Mayor Lightfoot has appointed me the next CPS Inspector General and for the privilege of working alongside the talented professionals of CPS OIG who are devoted to serving Chicago Public Schools. Through challenging times, our office will remain committed to the priority of making CPS a safe environment for children to learn. I also look forward to strengthening the working relationships with the Board of Education and CPS management. With the valuable contributions of everyone in the office, CPS OIG will continue to distinguish itself as a vigilant, independent agency dedicated to protecting children and holding accountable anyone responsible for fraud, corruption and waste at Chicago Public Schools,” said Will Fletcher.

The CPS Inspector General is appointed solely by the Mayor of the City of Chicago. His appointment will allow him to serve the balance of the term previously held, which will expire in 2022, after which time he will be considered for reappointment for a four-year term.

###