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**MOTHER SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS IN PRISON FOR MANSLAUGHTER
IN SUFFOCATION DEATH OF FOUR-MONTH-OLD SON**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a 23-year-old woman residing at one of the City's temporary homeless shelters in Queens has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for the suffocation death of her four-month-old son in March 2007.

District Attorney Brown said, "The life of this innocent and helpless child came to a tragic end at the hands of his own mother. He, like all children, deserved the opportunity to have a full and rewarding life. Under the circumstances, the sentence today is not inappropriate."

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Yoneli Rodriguez, 24, who resided at the Lincoln Motor Inn located at 90-35 Van Wyck Expressway in Jamaica, Queens. The defendant pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter earlier this month before Queens Supreme Court Justice Arthur J. Cooperman who imposed today's determinate term of 15 years in prison.

The District Attorney said that, in pleading guilty, the defendant admitted that in the early morning hours of March 30, 2007, she placed a pillow over the face of her four-month-old son, Darnel Angel Rodriguez. Despite the fact that the Lincoln Motor Inn is directly across the street from Jamaica Hospital Medical Center, Rodriguez then took the unconscious baby by cab to Elmhurst Hospital Center, where he was pronounced dead about five hours later.

Assistant District Attorney Mina Q. Malik, of the District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Marjory D. Fisher, Bureau Chief, and Kenneth M. Appelbaum and Lucinda C. Suarez, Deputy Chiefs and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Charles A. Testagrossa and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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Note to Editors: E-version of press release posted at www.queensda.org.