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NEWS RELEASE
AUGUST 18, 2020

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**MOTHER ARRAIGNED ON MANSLAUGHTER CHARGE IN CONNECTION
WITH DEATH OF HER TODDLER**

BROCKTON – The mother of a two year-old Whitman toddler has been arraigned for Manslaughter in the child’s death, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

Yesterday, a Plymouth County Grand Jury indicted Shaniqua Leonard, 29, of Whitman, and today, she pleaded not guilty in Brockton Superior Court to one count each of Manslaughter and Reckless Endangerment of a Child in the death of her 2 year-old daughter, Lyric Farrell. The Commonwealth requested Leonard be held on \$100,000 cash bail with conditions that she wear a GPS monitoring bracelet, have no contact with her additional children, she abstain from drug and alcohol use, undergo mental health screenings, and not carry a firearm. Superior Court Judge Maynard Kirpalani set bail at \$25,000 with the conditions requested by the Commonwealth.

The upgraded Manslaughter charge reflects information obtained during an investigation by Massachusetts State Police Detectives assigned to the Plymouth County District Attorney’s Office and Whitman Police after the 2 year-old victim was found unresponsive on December 28, 2019. On that day, shortly after midnight, Whitman Police received a 911 call from Leonard that her two-year-old daughter was unresponsive at 863 Washington Street #3 in Whitman. Whitman Police and Fire responded and transported the toddler to Brockton Hospital. The child was later medflighted to Children’s Hospital after a subdural hematoma was found on her brain, and on December 31, 2019, at approximately [3 p.m.](#), she was taken off of life support.

The charges allege that the 2 year-old was demonstrating signs of medical distress and was in need of immediate medical attention and that Leonard failed to obtain. An autopsy by the Office of the State Medical Examiner found that the child died as a result

of complications from blunt force trauma head injuries. Farrell was observed to have a subdural hematoma, subarachnoid hematoma and hemorrhaging of her optic nerve and retina. Doctors indicated that the injuries could not have been caused as Ms. Leonard claimed to investigators; by the child banging her own head.

Leonard is next scheduled to appear in court on September 22.

Assistant District Attorneys Jessica Kenny and Barbara Isola are prosecuting the case.

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