

## **Ritu Mahajan Estes**

### **Directing Attorney – Community Development Project**

Ritu Mahajan Estes is the Directing Attorney of Public Counsel's Community Development Project. Previously, she served as a Supervising Senior Staff Attorney within the project, where she led its small business and early care and education initiatives. During her 15 years at Public Counsel, Ritu has engaged in direct legal services, litigation, and policy advocacy to help create healthy, inclusive, and vibrant communities and build power in communities of color.

As a Senior Supervising Staff Attorney, Ritu led Public Counsel's efforts to provide legal services to hundreds of low-income small business owners across LA County each year. She oversaw the delivery of these services in multiple languages, and has worked to ensure our services are fully accessible. In the aftermath of the pandemic, she successfully negotiated settlement agreements for business owners negatively impacted by COVID-19 that involved the waiver of thousands of dollars in rent debt, and defended clients in frivolous and impermissible unlawful detainer and breach of contract lawsuits.

Ritu is a member of the Small Business Alliance for Equitable Communities and the State Small Business Coalition. In addition, she is a past Co-Chair of the Access & Inclusion Sub-Committee of the Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee and past member of the Long Beach Early Childhood Education Committee.

Ritu received her BA in Economics and Political Science from UC Irvine and her JD from UC Berkeley Law School.