



# Montgomery County *Commission for Women*

## The Honorable Sharon V. Burrell



Sharon V. Burrell was born and raised in Washington, D.C., where she attended public school. The first person in her family to attend college, Burrell graduated from [Barnard College of Columbia University](#), receiving a degree in English. In her junior year in college, she decided to pursue a career in law instead of writing or teaching. She credited this decision to inspiration from the television courtroom drama Perry Mason. Burrell earned her Juris Doctor degree from [Harvard Law School](#).

Burrell began her career as a law clerk for Judge Harry A. Cole, the first African American to serve on the [Court of Appeals of Maryland](#), the state's highest court. When her clerkship was complete, Burrell took a position as an associate at Cable, McDaniel, Bowie, and Bond in Baltimore, Maryland, where she practiced tax and corporate law. After leaving the private sector, she began her long and distinguished career in public service as an attorney for the Montgomery County Attorney's Office. For 21 years, Burrell represented the County Government, its agencies and employees in many different areas of litigation in both state and federal trial and appellate courts.

In 2008, Gov. Martin O'Malley appointed Burrell as an Associate Judge for the [Circuit Court for Montgomery County](#), Maryland, 6th Judicial Circuit. With her appointment, Burrell became the first African American female judge in Montgomery County, where she presided over juvenile, family, criminal and civil cases.

In addition to her work as an attorney and her service on the judiciary, Burrell is, and has always been, active in her community. Some of her professional memberships and accomplishments include: [National Association of Women Judges](#); [Maryland State Bar Association](#); [National Bar Association](#); [Montgomery County Bar Association](#); [Federal Bar Association](#); serving as President of the [J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association](#); [Maryland Bar Foundation Fellow](#); [Montgomery County Inn of Court](#), through which she served as the Chair of the American Inns of Court Program Awards Committee; serving as a volunteer mediator for the [Washington Area Lawyers for the Arts](#); and has serving as a volunteer in the Montgomery County Teen Court Program first as a lawyer and then as a judge.

Burrell is a member of [Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.](#), the [NAACP](#), and the [NCNW](#). She served as Senior Vice-President of [Ivy Vine Charities, Inc.](#), and is the recipient of many commendations and awards including: Certificate of Recognition and Appreciation, Montgomery County Executive, 1994, 2005; Certificate of Appreciation, Montgomery County Department of Health, 1994; Superior Service Award, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Theta Omega Omega Chapter, 2004; Legal Excellence Award, J. Franklyn Bourne Bar Association, 2010; Women's History Month, Women Who Make a Difference Award, Gap Buster, Inc. & Lincoln Park Historical Society, 2012 and Maryland's Top 100 Women, The Daily Record, 2012.

Burrell is the author of 'Legal Malpractice of the Tax Attorney,' published in [The Tax Executive](#) (1982), and is a contributing author in [Dear Sisters, Dear Daughters: Strategies for Success from Multicultural Women Attorneys \(2009\)](#), published by the [American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession](#).