75th Anniversary of the NJ Division on Civil Rights Law Against Discrimination

“STOP THE HATE” SERIES
2020 - 2021

75
The Division on Civil Rights (DCR)’s role in preventing and eliminating discrimination and bias-based harassment in New Jersey has never been more important.

The Division enforces the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) and the New Jersey Family Leave Act (FLA). Enacted in 1945, the LAD is the oldest state civil rights statute in the country, and one of the broadest. It prohibits acts of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation in employment, housing, and places of public accommodation (places open to the public, including businesses, restaurants, schools, summer camps, medical providers, government offices and agencies, etc.) based on actual or perceived race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability and other protected characteristics.

DCR enforces the LAD by investigating claims of discrimination and harassment filed by members of the public and by filing enforcement actions when we find probable cause to believe that discrimination or bias-based harassment has occurred. We also initiate our own investigations to address systemic discrimination and undertake strategic enforcement actions in areas of the law that are under-enforced by private attorneys.

In addition to investigating and enforcing violations of the law, in the past several years DCR has also taken numerous steps to expand its proactive approach to preventing discrimination statewide.

This includes working to broaden the scope of the Law Against Discrimination while simultaneously promulgating regulations and guidance documents to clarify the scope of existing law, including guidance on New Jersey's sweeping equal pay law, the policing of Black hairstyles, and civil rights protections related to COVID-19; spotlighting important civil rights issues by issuing groundbreaking reports, including on sexual harassment, the rise of hate and bias, and the impacts of interpersonal and systemic bias, including systemic racism, on New Jersey's children; creating a Community Relations Unit/Civil Rights Incident Response Team to work within communities to bring people together to recognize our mutual humanity and to respond after civil rights incidents occur, and to create public campaigns, events, and initiatives to raise the profile of important civil rights issues; creating an Education and Training Unit to provide high quality trainings on the Law Against Discrimination, interpersonal and systemic bias, including implicit and unconscious bias, and other important civil rights issues; and creating and launching an online filing system to remove barriers for people seeking justice from the Division.

Our goal: equal rights for all New Jersey residents.
2020 Accomplishments and Upcoming in 2021:

- **DCR by the numbers:** Although DCR’s physical offices were closed for more than nine months of 2020, DCR accepted 435 new complaints from member of the public, closed 528 investigations, issued findings of probable cause to believe that a violation of the LAD had occurred in 38, and closed 162 cases via a settlement agreement reached by the parties on mutually agreeable terms, including 93 that included monetary relief for the complainant. DCR collected almost $1 million dollars in damages for victims of bias and discrimination and $61,000 in penalties for the State.

- **Presentations and trainings:** DCR conducted 62 presentations and trainings in 2020, reaching more than 10,000 people.

- **Youth Bias Task Force Report and implementation:** In October of 2020, New Jersey’s Interagency Task Force to Combat Youth Bias, chaired by DCR, issued a 103-page report recommending sweeping reforms to the State’s education system, tougher anti-bias laws, and a robust public engagement campaign to address hate, bias, and stereotyping. Those recommended reforms include (1) Significant changes to school curricula to incorporate anti-bias coursework; (2) Expansive anti-bias training for all state educators; (3) Actions by DCR to address racial disparities in school discipline, criminal justice referrals, and the identification of both academically advanced students and students with disabilities; (4) Reforms to make New Jersey’s criminal hate crime laws among the toughest in the nation. The Legislature has already introduced legislation to implement many of the report’s recommendation. In November of 2020, DCR launched a student competition to inspire children and young adults to stand up against hate and bias—we received 172 student submissions and winners winner will be announced on April 28th.

- **Project HOME:** In September 2020, DCR announced the results of a year-long initiative targeting housing discrimination against those who seek to pay rent with federal, state, or local rental assistance, such as Section 8 housing choice vouchers or the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program (CVERAP). A combination of enforcement, prevention, and public awareness efforts, the initiative included notices of violation to over 100 violators and DCR was able to reach agreements with high-volume violators to change their policies, undergo training, and pay penalties. DCR also reached agreements with Zillow, CoStar, ApartmentSmart.com, the New Jersey Apartment Association, Bright MLS, NEXUS Association of Realtors, and others to stop source of lawful income discrimination either by preventing illegal postings on online real estate and rental platforms, or by ensuring that all training for real estate agents and large housing providers in New Jersey includes a focus on source of lawful income discrimination.

- **Sexual harassment:** DCR hosted 3 public hearings on sexual harassment around the state (in Asbury Park, Hackensack, and Atlantic City) in 2019, and in February of 2020 issued a report with comprehensive findings and recommendations for how to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, in housing, and in places open to the public in New Jersey. We also drafted legislation to implement the recommendations in the report, which has been introduced by Assemblywoman Quijano in the Assembly and Senator Weinberg in the Senate.

- **Guidance on the Diane Allen Equal Pay Act and COVID-19:** In March 2020, DCR issued a guidance document explaining the Diane Allen Equal Pay Act. In April, DCR issued guidance on COVID-19 and civil rights, including reasonable accommodations for people who have COVID-19 or need to care for someone who has COVID-19, the rise in COVID-19 related harassment against members of our AAPI communities, and race discrimination in healthcare. The COVID-19 related guidance has been updated several times since.
- **NJBIAS**: In November of 2020, DCR launched the NJ Bias Incident Access System (NJBIAS), an online portal that allows victims of bias, harassment, and discrimination to file complaints online with our office and with the Division of Criminal Justice. The Portal dramatically reduced barriers to filing for individuals who have been subjected to discrimination and bias-based harassment and allows Respondents to respond to complaints with our office online. We also amended our Practice and Procedure regulations to account for the new system.

- **Community relations**: In August of 2020, DCR brought on a Director of Community Relations to start a Community Relations Unit/Bias Incident Response Team. Four community relations specialists joined DCR on March 15, 2021. The team is working with stakeholders to plan conferences, town halls, programs and events to prevent bias and discrimination and respond in communities following major civil rights incidents, including through mediation, trauma informed and restorative justice practices, and community dialogue. This outreach will focus on historically underserved communities and populations. DCR also opened @CivilRightsNJ FaceBook and Twitter social media accounts in January of 2021 to raise the public profile of civil rights issues in New Jersey.

- **Director-initiated investigations**: DCR is working with the Affirmative Civil Rights and Labor Enforcement Section within the Division of Law on a wide range of systemic investigations into discrimination and harassment in New Jersey.

- **Education and training**: DCR is in the process of establishing an Education and Training Unit that will create and provide high quality trainings and public education on the Law Against Discrimination, unconscious bias, all anti-bias matters, and other important civil rights issues. The Unit will also conceptualize and write curricula to support trainings and for use by employers, housing providers, and places of public accommodation (including K-12 schools).

- **Alternative dispute resolution**: DCR is in the process of establishing a full time Alternative Dispute Resolution Unit that will mediate complex disputes under the LAD and FLA and intervene to resolve complaints quickly, especially when there is irreparable harm or other need for urgent intervention.
“You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world. And you have to do it all the time.” ~ Angela Davis

We, the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (DCR), are dedicated to protecting the people of New Jersey from discrimination and bias-based harassment in employment, housing, and places of public accommodation. Achieving full civil rights and eliminating discrimination is not only our goal, but our mission.

For far too long, people of color, particularly members of the Black community, have been underserved, victimized, marginalized, and oppressed by many institutions in our state and nation. It is for this reason that it is important to state unequivocally that DCR stands with Black lives and pronounces that Black Lives Matter.

But words are not enough. Commitments cannot be performative and must be more than a promise. The first of many steps towards anti-racist work is acknowledgment. Thus, we begin by acknowledging the history of the land we call New Jersey. New Jersey was originally the land of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Indian Tribe, Powhatan Renape Nation, and Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation. Hundreds of years later, New Jersey was the last Northern state to abolish the institution of slavery in 1804. Even today, New Jersey has the nation’s worst racial disparities between Black and white people when it comes to incarceration rates for both adults and children; maternal, fetal and general health outcomes; and wealth and wage gaps. New Jersey also has the 4th largest number of hate groups in the country.

The second step is assessment. This year DCR celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Law Against Discrimination (LAD), the first state level civil rights statute to go into effect in the United States after Reconstruction. But this year has also exposed two pandemics: COVID-19 and systemic racism. COVID-19 has already taken 20,439 lives in New Jersey alone, including 3,070 Black lives, and it has laid bare devastating racial and ethnic health disparities in Black and Brown communities. At the same time, the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and so many others were a reminder that Black communities and communities of color continue to be subjected to violence.

This must end. Differential treatment based on race, in both the law enforcement and healthcare settings, violates the LAD. That means it is unlawful in New Jersey for a doctor to prescribe pain medication to a white patient who presents with certain symptoms, but then refuse to prescribe pain medication to a Black patient who presents with those exact same symptoms, because of the patient’s race. And it is unlawful for a law enforcement officer to pull over a Black driver for specific conduct, rather than a white driver who engaged in the exact same conduct, because of the driver’s race.

Addressing these dual pandemics requires a third step, action. DCR is committed to fighting racism and systemic injustice. We are committed to doing the real work – real hard work, real community work, real institutional and systemic work, required to advance equity and justice. But even that is not enough, without centering the voices, experiences, and expertise of those from the communities most impacted by systemic racism in our initiatives, programs, projects, outreach, training, and events.
The New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (DCR) is committed to the following concrete actions in 2021:

- Working with Attorney General Grewal, Governor Murphy, and the Legislature to expand the protections in the Law Against Discrimination to ensure that our civil rights laws remain at the forefront of civil rights legislation nationwide.
- Partnering with stakeholders to implement the recommendations of the Youth Bias Task Force, which were crafted to combat systemic and interpersonal biases among our state’s young people.
- Conducting community needs assessments to center the community’s voice in all of DCR’s proactive work, and using those community needs assessments to inform new investigations to address systemic racism in employment, housing, and places of public accommodation.
- Recognizing the impact of systemic racism & unconscious bias as we conduct civil rights investigations.
- Developing a Community Relations Unit and implementing strategic partnerships, community engagement, advocacy, and outreach efforts via a new bias incident response team, including evidence-based strategies like restorative justice, trauma informed practices, community mediation services, and anti-racist programming.
- Implementing a new online case filing system—NJBIASTo ensure that all NJ residents can access justice through DCR.
- Developing an Education & Training Unit to create and provide high quality trainings on the Law Against Discrimination, unconscious bias, and other important civil rights issues.
- Developing a Mediation Unit to work with parties to reach mutually agreeable resolutions of their cases where possible.
- Ensuring that persons who live or work in New Jersey are treated in accordance with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination and that employers, housing providers, and places of public accommodation are held accountable when discrimination or bias-based harassment occurs.

Our only request is that you hold us accountable.
DCR is here to protect and secure your rights.

Ways to contact us:
- Phone: 1-833-NJDCR4U (711 relay)
- Online: NJCivilRights.gov and https://bias.njcivilrights.gov to file a complaint
- Email: CommunityRelations@NJCivilRights.gov
- Social Media: Facebook and Twitter @CivilRightsNJ #CivilRightsNJ #StopTheHate
A BLAST FROM THE DCR PAST!
Benn Meistrich joined the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights as a Legal Specialist in 2004, working with investigators, managers and attorneys on intake, investigations, findings, litigation plans and strategies.

He also served as Division liaison to the New Jersey Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Interactions with the Transgender Community working group, and was a member of the Governor’s Transgender Equality Task Force.

Prior to working at the Division, Benn served as Chief of Staff for the Division of Consumer Affairs, where he managed the Director’s Office, monitored professional licensing boards, supervised the Speakers’ Bureau and Elder Fraud Task Force, and assisted in formulating legal and policy initiatives with the Director and Deputy Attorneys General. He spent his earlier legal career as a sole general practitioner with a significant focus on issues related to the LGBTQ+ community.

Benn served on the boards of Jersey Pride, Inc., the New Jersey Lesbian & Gay Task Force, Gay Activist Alliance of Morris County, and Planned Parenthood of Northern, Central and Southern New Jersey, among other organizations.

Civil Rights Trailblazer Award
He is “Our Benn”. One of my biggest supporters, teachers, and mentors on all life’s fronts. He is my go to person for all career decisions and big life moments. He is kind, sweet, humble, and hilarious all wrapped in his 6-foot gentle stature. He embodies what a good man should always aspire to be. Our Benn, the silent warrior, the car enthusiast, the beloved husband, cousin, brother, son, confidant, work husband, forever-favorite uncle.

Benn was just one of the most down to earth people I’ve met. He was always so pleasant and was genuinely personable. He was resourceful and was always a call, a text or an email away. I absolutely loved working with him. He knew just how to approach constructive criticism with tact. He always listened to input and even to opinions that were different from his.

Every interaction I had with him left me in such a good mood, his kindness was so authentic and he had such a wonderful and unique humor about him. My colleagues in Newark were very lucky to have him as a friend and resource.

He was so important to the AC office and me. Benn was more than a colleague he was a great friend. We cherish our times with him. It is going to be so hard to guide the AC office without him. Our hearts are broken. and he will be missed beyond words.

Benn was an ever calming presence in my life. He just always had a way of making things feel not so bad, no matter how frazzled I was.

Benn was a great asset to DCR and the world. His wit and good humor will live on.
On April 16, 1945, Governor Walter E. Edge signed a bill sponsored by Dr. James O. Hill, enacting the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination and creating the Division Against Discrimination (now known as the Division on Civil Rights). Dr. Hill, who served as State Assemblyman for Newark, drafted the law to prevent discrimination on account of race, creed, color, and national origin or ancestry, making the LAD the nation’s very first state civil rights statute to go into effect 75 years ago. We thank Governor Edge and Dr. Hill, and realize that many feel the nation is literally at the edge of a hill.

The New Jersey Division on Civil Rights invites all community members to join us in April 2021 to re-imagine how to create a more equitable future. The joint pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism have impacted all areas of life: public health, education, employment, housing, and criminal justice. Spring represents rebirth and we invite you to join us for a state-wide convening, a participatory virtual experience for learning, networking, and transformation. The convening will cultivate community, identify actionable principles for equity, scale effective justice, and bring about multi-faceted community healing.

The virtual community event includes a luminary keynote and panelists, a celebratory tribute to our New Jersey civil rights trailblazers, a historical timeline display and interactive exhibit showcase, strategic and collaborative sessions around discrimination and harassment, health equity, anti-racism, youth anti-bias engagement, fair housing, and more.
The mission of the Division on Civil Rights is to prevent, eliminate, and remedy discrimination and bias-based harassment in employment, housing, and places of public accommodation throughout New Jersey. DCR’s vision is a New Jersey free from discrimination and bias where all people are treated with equal dignity and equal respect and have access to equal opportunity. The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) prohibits discrimination and harassment based on actual or perceived race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, and other protected characteristics. The law applies in employment, housing, and places of public accommodation (generally, places open to the public, including businesses, restaurants, schools, summer camps, medical providers, government agencies, etc.).

75th Anniversary of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights and NJ Law Against Discrimination
“Stop the Hate” Series
NJCivilRights.gov

Zoom Registration Links:

1. Civil Rights Trailblazer Award: Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman
Wed., April 7, 2021, 1-2pm:
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oymvPD0aSVK7H2fLsvvB5w

2. The Future of the LAD and NJ Civil Rights Panel
Wed., April 14, 2021, 1-2:30pm
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_W_stzVJ6Sc28Z0zeqeAVkg

3. Health Equity Panel: How Racism Impacts Public Health
Wed., April 21, 2021, 2-4pm
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_juu5hvcAQmuFHzTBeVj1iA

4. Current Challenges in Fair Housing Panel
Wed., April 28, 2021, 12:30-1:30pm
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Fqd3eZPsTTKE_3lyPCNE7w

5. An Anti-Bias Vision for the Next Generation: Youth Conversation and Art Competition Exhibit Reveal and Awards Ceremony
Wed., April 28 6:30-8pm
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_l26mvH1nSLutJ1W2oovlag
75th Anniversary of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights And NJ Law Against Discrimination “Stop the Hate” Series 2020 – 2021 #CivilRightsNJ #StopTheHate

Wed., April 7, 2021, 1-2pm
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oymvPD0aSVK7H2fLsvvB5w

75th Anniversary of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights and NJ Law Against Discrimination “Stop the Hate” Series: Trailblazer Award

Welcome: Governor Phil Murphy

Opening Remarks: Attorney General Gurbir Grewal and Division on Civil Rights Director, Rachel Wainer Apter

Civil Rights Trailblazer Award Keynote Address: Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman

Closing Remarks: Division on Civil Rights Commissioner and NAACP New Jersey State Conference President Richard T. Smith

New Jersey Division on Civil Rights and Law Against Discrimination Virtual Exhibit Reveal
Wed., April 14, 2021, 1-2:30pm
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_W_stzVJ6Sc28Z0zeqeAVkg

75th Anniversary of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights and NJ Law Against Discrimination “Stop the Hate” Series: The Future of the LAD and Civil Rights in NJ

Series Panel 1: The Future of the LAD and Civil Rights in NJ. Moderated by DCR Deputy Director, Rosemary DiSavino

Mary Ciccone, Director of Policy, Disability Rights New Jersey
Sara Cullinane, Director and Co-Founder, Make the Road New Jersey
Jeanne LoCiero, Legal Director, American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey
Ryan Haygood, President and CEO, New Jersey Institute for Social Justice
Akil Roper, Vice President and Assistant General Counsel, Legal Services of New Jersey

Session Description:
When the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination went into effect in April of 1945, it made New Jersey the first state with a comprehensive anti-discrimination statute since Reconstruction. Since that time, New Jersey has remained at the forefront of ensuring of its citizens’ civil rights by amending the LAD numerous times, adding further protections to keep pace with evolving societal changes. In describing the impact of the LAD, the New Jersey Supreme Court recently said, “[o]ne searches in vain to find another New Jersey enactment having an equivalently powerful statement of purpose.” This presentation will briefly discuss New Jersey’s civil rights history and will outline the future of how the LAD could or should expand going forward to address current civil rights issues in New Jersey.

Learning Objectives:
Attendees should gain the following from this virtual discussion and its CLE resources:
1. An understanding of the key civil rights protections that have made the LAD one of the broadest civil rights laws in the country;
2. An understanding of areas in which discrimination and bias-based harassment continue to harm the people of New Jersey;
3. A sense of the work that is being done to combat persistent discrimination and bias-based harassment in New Jersey given the current protections offered by the LAD;
4. A sense of any changes needed to ensure that the LAD and its enforcing regulations effectively address the ongoing and evolving obstacles to real equality under the law.
Wed., April 21, 2021, 2pm-4pm
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_juu5hvcAQmuFHrTBeVj1iA

75th Anniversary of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights and NJ Law Against Discrimination “Stop the Hate” Series: Health Equity: How Racism Impacts Public Health

Series Panel 2: Health Equity: How Racism Impacts Public Health Moderated by Mr. Nashon Hornsby, JD, LLM, Department of Health Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Community Health Services

Opening Remarks: First Lady Tammy Murphy, introduced by DCR Chief of Staff, Aarin Williams

Dorothy Roberts, George A. Weiss University Professor of Law and Sociology and the Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights at the University of Pennsylvania
Dr. Bob Atkins, Director, New Jersey Health Initiatives Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Dr. Brenda Seals, The College of New Jersey Public Health Department Chair and Associate Professor
Dr. Chris Pernell, Chief Strategic Integration and Health Equity Officer, University Hospital, Fellow of the American College of Preventive Medicine and Clinical Assistant Professor, Rutgers New Jersey Medical School
Thalia Sirjue, Deputy Chief of Staff, New Jersey Department of Health
Greg Paulson, Executive Director of the Trenton Health Team

Session Description:
This interactive session will explore the history of systemic racism and discrimination in healthcare, mental health services, and other social structures and its impact on health outcomes and health disparities. This panel of leading health equity experts will discuss their roles with respect to addressing and eradicating inequities, while also sharing with attendees the complexities inherent in health disparities, given the breadth and depth of racial disparities in the areas of social determinants of health, such as in access to care, education, transportation, employment, housing, and income.

Learning Objectives:
Attendees should gain the following from this virtual discussion and its CLE resources:
1. An awareness of some of the key disparities that demonstrate that racial minorities and other protected classes are disproportionately impacted in the quality of care rendered in the healthcare system;
2. An understanding of the LAD and what civil rights violations in healthcare look like with insight on maternal child health, COVID-19, etc.
3. An understanding of the interconnectivity of the social determinants of health (i.e., access to care, education, transportation, employment, housing, and income) with health outcomes;
4. A sense of the work that must be performed in healthcare and in the areas of the social determinants of health and advocacy in order to address systemic racism and eradicate health inequities;

5. An awareness of some of the strategies being undertaken by panelists to address racial disparities in health care; and

6. Some of the challenges that persist as a result of discriminatory practices in healthcare and possible action steps community members can take to help lessen the impact of bias and related inequities in New Jersey.
75th Anniversary of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights and NJ Law Against Discrimination “Stop the Hate” Series: Current Challenges in Fair Housing

Series Panel 3: Current Challenges in Fair Housing. Moderated by DCR Chief of Strategic Initiatives and Enforcement, Aaron Scherzer

Opening Remarks:  Jeanine Worden, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

James C. Williams, IV, Director of Racial Justice Policy, Fair Share Housing Center
Dr. Nichole Nelson, Policy Analyst, New Jersey Institute for Social Justice
Renee Koubiadis, Executive Director, Anti-Poverty Network of NJ
Alice Kwong, Senior Supervisory Attorney on the LSNJ Statewide Hotline and Co-Chief Counsel of Housing Law, Legal Services of New Jersey

Closing Remarks: Morgan Williams, General Counsel for the National Fair Housing Alliance

Session Description:
The Law Against Discrimination includes a prohibition against housing discrimination. This panel will discuss current challenges in fair housing, focused primarily on New Jersey, with some insight into issues at the national level. Experienced advocates will share the most important fair housing issues they have encountered in their work. The discussion will focus on fair housing challenges, including those related to systemic and interpersonal discrimination, and the ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated and laid bare existing challenges. The panel will cover both longstanding entrenched issues and new issues that have arisen more recently. Finally, the panelists will discuss possible steps to address the challenges identified during the course of the presentation.

Learning Objectives:
Attendees should gain the following from this virtual discussion and its CLE resources:
- New Jersey’s LAD housing related history and its future given current racial justice and COVID concerns.
- April is Fair Housing Month: Clarification around the misconception that affordable housing and fair housing are the same.
- Examples of prevalent forms of housing discrimination and how New Jersey has the opportunity to enforce fair housing law more effectively.
Wed., April 28, 2021, 6:30-8pm
https://njoag-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_l26mvH1n5LutJ1W2oovIag

75th Anniversary of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights and NJ Law Against Discrimination “Stop the Hate” Series: An Anti-Bias Vision for the Next Generation-Youth Conversation and Art Competition Exhibit Reveal

In 2019, more than half of known bias offenders in New Jersey were age 25 or younger. The recommendations in New Jersey’s Interagency Task Force to Combat Youth Bias report focus on the future of New Jersey’s young people and outline how we can work towards a more equitable and just state. Task Force recommendations outline a bold vision to guide New Jersey’s young people, unapologetically, down a new path, one where all of New Jersey’s communities are seen, reflected, and valued. To see this vision become a reality, we must educate our entire community to recognize and challenge implicit, explicit, and systemic biases, we must begin dismantling the biases imbedded in our State’s institutions, and we must protect New Jersey’s historically-marginalized residents. DCR’s implementation of the student youth art, hashtag, slogan, and video competition was a part of the Report, launching a statewide campaign to stand up to hate in New Jersey. We are thrilled to showcase the contest submissions and discuss the winning anti-bias pieces with our students.


Opening Remarks: Elise Boddie, Rutgers Law School, Professor of Law, Henry Rutgers Professor, Robert L. Carter Scholar, founding Newark Director of Rutgers University’s Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice

Youth Awards Ceremony and Conversation/Virtual Exhibit Reveal

Candid Anti-Bias Conversation. Moderated by DCR Legal Specialist, Danielle Thorne

1. YBTF Student Competition Winner - slogan
2. YBTF Student Competition Winner - art
3. YBTF Student Competition Winner - hashtag
4. YBTF Student Competition Winner - video

Awards Presentation. Moderated by DCR Community Relations Specialist, Ashley Riker

Closing Remarks: Attorney General Gurbir Grewal and DCR Director, Rachel Wainer Apter

#StopTheHate Exhibits, Engagement and Next Steps: DCR Director of Outreach and Community Relations, Dr. Denalerie Johnson-Faniel
Gov. Edge Signs Anti-Bias Bill

Photo shows Governor Edge signing the Fair Employment Practice Act. To his right is Meyer Pesin, editor of The Jewish Standard, and left Assemblyman Hill who sponsored the bill.
Things You Should Know About

The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination

1. The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) prohibits discrimination and harassment based on actual or perceived race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, and other protected characteristics. The law applies in employment, housing, and places of public accommodation (generally, places open to the public, including businesses, restaurants, schools, summer camps, medical providers, etc.).

2. The anti-discrimination provisions mean that an employer cannot fire someone, pay someone less money, or refuse to hire or promote someone because of their race. Similarly, a housing provider cannot refuse to rent an apartment to a couple because of their sexual orientation. And a place of public accommodation cannot refuse service to someone because of their religion.

3. The LAD also prohibits bias-based harassment. That means if someone is being subjected to bias-based harassment that creates a hostile environment, an employer, housing provider, or place of public accommodation must take reasonable steps to stop the harassment if they knew or should have known about it. That includes harassment between coworkers, tenants, or patrons, not just harassment by a landlord or by a supervisor at work. The LAD also prohibits “quid pro quo” sexual harassment—where a person in a position of power demands sex or sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment, such as continued employment or a promotion.

4. The LAD prohibits retaliation against a person for complaining about discrimination or bias-based harassment, or otherwise exercising or attempting to exercise their rights under the law. For example, an employer cannot fire someone for reporting sexual harassment to human resources. And a housing provider cannot evict someone for reporting housing discrimination to DCR.

5. The New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (DCR) enforces the LAD and is tasked with preventing and eliminating discrimination and bias-based harassment in New Jersey. Anyone who believes their rights under the LAD have been violated may file a complaint with DCR within 180 days of the incident.

To find out more or to file a complaint, go to NJCivilRights.gov or call 1.833.NJDCR4U
DEPENDING ON WHAT TYPE OF BIAS INCIDENT YOU ARE REPORTING,

you may want to consider also reporting to the **NJ Division on Civil Rights** (DCR). DCR enforces the **NJ Law Against Discrimination** (LAD), and can get money damages and equitable relief for people who have been discriminated against or subjected to bias-based harassment in employment, housing, or places of public accommodation.

*The LAD prohibits discrimination based on actual or perceived:*

- Race
- Religion
- National Origin
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity or Expression
- Disability
- Other Protected Characteristics

*It applies in:*

- Employment
- Housing
- Places of Public Accommodation
  *Including places open to or that serve the public like businesses, stores, schools, medical providers, and government offices or agencies*

**IF YOU WERE SUBJECTED TO DISCRIMINATION OR BIAS-BASED HARASSMENT**

by your employer, housing provider, or a place of public accommodation, you can file a complaint with DCR by going to [https://bias.njcivilrights.gov](https://bias.njcivilrights.gov) or by calling **1.866.NJDCR4U** and asking a DCR receptionist to assist you in filling out the online form.

A DCR investigator will then contact you to conduct an **intake interview** to determine whether DCR has jurisdiction over your complaint. If it does, DCR will prepare a **verified complaint** form for your signature. Once you sign the verified complaint, you are known as the **Complainant**.

DCR will serve your complaint on the **Respondent**—the party that may have violated your civil rights. The Respondent has a chance to respond with their version of events.

DCR then conducts a **neutral investigation** to determine whether the law was violated.

*To find out more or to file a complaint go to www.njcivilrights.gov*
How to File a Complaint with the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights

About DCR

The New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (DCR) is the state agency charged with enforcing New Jersey's civil rights laws, including the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) and the New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA). The mission of DCR is to protect the people of New Jersey from discrimination and bias-based harassment in employment, housing, and public accommodations.

The LAD prohibits discrimination based on actual or perceived race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability and other protected characteristics.

This law applies to employment, housing, and places of public accommodation (places open to the public, such as businesses, restaurants, schools, summer camps, medical providers, government offices and agencies, etc.).

How to File a Complaint

1. In order to file a complaint with DCR, you must first submit an intake form. You can submit the intake form:
   - Online by creating an account and using the NJ Bias Investigation Access System (NJBIAS) at NJCivilRights.gov
   - By calling 1.833.NJDCR4U and asking a DCR receptionist to assist you in filling out the form on the NJ Bias Investigation Access System (NJBIAS)

2. A DCR investigator will contact you to conduct an intake interview to determine whether DCR has jurisdiction over your complaint (i.e., whether you are alleging a violation of the LAD that occurred within the past 180 days and if they can help).
   - If so, DCR will prepare a verified complaint form for your signature. Once you sign the verified complaint, you are known as the Complainant.

3. DCR will serve your complaint on the Respondent—the party that may have violated your civil rights. The Respondent has a chance to respond with their version of events.

4. DCR then conducts an investigation, which may include:
   - Interviews with you, the Respondent, and witnesses
   - Review of relevant documents, photos, video recordings
   - It is important that you preserve all relevant evidence, including electronically stored evidence such as text and email messages, until your case has concluded.

At the end of the investigation, DCR will determine whether there is probable cause to believe a violation of the law occurred.

Dispute Resolution

DCR also offers free dispute resolution services to parties who wish to resolve the complaint on mutually agreeable terms. A voluntary resolution can be negotiated at any time during the complaint or investigation process.
Things You Should Know About Civil Rights and COVID-19

1. The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) protects you from discrimination and harassment based on actual or perceived race, national origin, religion, disability, and other protected characteristics in employment, housing, and places of public accommodation (places open to the public, including businesses, schools, medical providers, etc.), including when the conduct at issue is related to COVID-19.

2. The LAD’s protections in employment mean, for example, that your employer cannot fire you because you coughed at work and they perceived you to have COVID-19. And if you have east-Asian heritage and a coworker repeatedly harasses you by calling this “the Chinese virus” or claiming that Chinese people “caused” COVID-19 or were responsible for spreading it, your employer must take reasonable action to stop the harassment if they knew or should have known about it. Finally, if your employer lays off workers because of COVID-19, they cannot select employees to lay off based on race, national origin, religion, age, disability, or any other LAD-protected characteristic.

3. Places of public accommodation, like stores and medical facilities, cannot discriminate based on race, disability, religion, gender identity or expression, or other LAD-protected characteristics in their provision of services. For example, it is unlawful for a medical facility to refuse to treat Black and white patients because of their race. In addition, the LAD requires places of public accommodation to provide reasonable accommodations to patrons with a disability unless doing so would be an undue burden on their operations. For a grocery store or pharmacy, that means making a contact-free method of obtaining goods available to a person who cannot wear a mask because of a disability. For other places of public accommodation, like gyms and movie theaters, if there is no reasonable accommodation that the establishment can provide that would mitigate the risk of COVID-19 transmission to its staff and to other patrons and not be an undue burden on its operations, then it can deny entry to people who cannot wear masks because of a disability.

4. The prohibition on discrimination and bias-based harassment in housing means, for example, that a landlord cannot ask a tenant to move out because they have COVID-19 or because the landlord believes they have COVID-19. Similarly, a landlord cannot refuse to rent a property to you because you are Jewish and they say that Jewish people are responsible for spreading COVID-19.

5. You may be able to take job-protected leave under the New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA) to care for a family member, or someone who is the equivalent of family, who has a serious health condition, including a diagnosis of COVID-19, or who has been isolated or quarantined because of suspected exposure to COVID-19. You may also be eligible to take job-protected leave to care for your child if their school or place of care was ordered closed due to COVID-19.

To find out more or to file a complaint, go to NJCivilRights.gov or call 1.833.NJDCR4U
HAVE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW

→ Been turned away from treatment or testing at a hospital or doctor’s office?
→ Had your or their symptoms or conditions ignored?
→ Been tested without giving consent or more often than needed?

This may have been discrimination.

THE DIVISION ON CIVIL RIGHTS IS HERE TO HELP

The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination outlaws discrimination in medical facilities (hospitals, doctor’s offices, pharmacies, testing centers, clinics, etc.) based on race, religion, gender/sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, pregnancy/breastfeeding status, and disability, among others.

1-833-NJDCR4U | NJCivilRights.gov
711 (Relay Service) | #CivilRightsNJ
The New Jersey Law Against Discrimination protects you from discrimination and bias-based harassment in housing.

For example, landlords cannot harass or discriminate against tenants, agents or brokers cannot discriminate in who they show or rent homes to, and lenders may not discriminate in mortgage terms.

To find out more or to file a complaint, contact the NJ Division on Civil Rights. NJCivilRights.gov | 866-405-3050
An Anti-Bias Vision For The Next Generation

In 2019, more than half of known bias offenders in New Jersey were age 25 or younger. 994 bias incidents were reported to NJ law enforcement in 2019—the largest number since the State began reporting this data more than 25 years ago. Bias not only impacts the victim’s physical, emotional, and mental health, but that of the entire community. The recommendations in New Jersey’s Interagency Task Force to Combat Youth Bias report focus on the future of New Jersey’s young people and outline how we can work towards a more equitable and just state.

Root Causes of Youth Bias

One of the key conclusions of the Report is that children do not simply wake up one day and decide to commit a hate crime. Instead, children begin to recognize and unconsciously internalize bias and racism at a very young age, even when the adults in their lives are not deliberately sharing biased views with them. Children learn bias at home, in school, in their communities, and, increasingly, on social media. In school, for example, children take note of whose stories and histories are taught and valued in the curriculum (and whose are not), whose misbehavior is excused (and whose is policed), and whose academic achievement is supported and expected (and whose is not). Whether children act on learned biases ultimately comes down to whether they view it as socially acceptable to do so. When our communities’ remain silent in the face of stereotypes, hate, and clear systemic disparities in our schools and communities, they allow bias and hate to spread unchecked. As noted in the report, “Our community’s words and actions speak volumes to our children, but our silence and inaction sometimes speak louder.” In addition, as social media has amplified racism, extremism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, and white nationalism, and as political rhetoric has become more divisive and even dehumanizing, the number of bias incidents in New Jersey has risen steeply.

Where Our New Jersey Community Is Today and Where We Go From Here

New Jersey has a number of laws and regulations meant to address discrimination and bias, and its state agencies have a number of programs and strategies meant to do the same. But the Task Force received near unanimous feedback that the State’s existing efforts have not been sufficient to comprehensively prevent or address systemic racism, institutional bias, and interpersonal bias. Many of New Jersey’s local communities and non-profit organizations have tried to fill that gap, and their work provides valuable lessons. But unlike state action, uncoordinated local efforts cannot reach all our state’s young people. It is also clear from community feedback that it is impossible to address interpersonal bias without addressing systemic bias and systemic racism. Indeed, part of how we got here is by failing to address the ways in which many of the institutions that shape our country have a long legacy of excluding, oppressing, and degrading people of color, religious minorities, immigrants, women, LGBTQ+ people, and people with disabilities.

Recommendations

The following Task Force recommendations therefore outline a bold vision to guide New Jersey’s young people, unapologetically, down a new path, one where all of New Jersey’s communities are seen, reflected, and valued. To see this vision become a reality, we must educate our entire community to recognize and challenge implicit,
explicit, and systemic biases, we must begin dismantling the biases imbedded in our State’s institutions, and we must protect New Jersey’s historically-marginalized residents. The Report outlines 27 recommendations in three categories (education, enforcement, and public engagement), but the first two are, by far, the most critical.

1. Require comprehensive anti-bias education for students in public schools throughout the state, and develop curricula support materials through DOE; and
2. Require anti-bias training for all teachers and school employees, including training on implicit bias, institutional bias, and structural bias.

**Additional Education Recommendations**

3. Address discrimination in the imposition of school discipline.
4. Reconvene the Education-Law Working Group to study potential amendments to New Jersey’s Uniform Memorandum of Agreement to reduce disparities in criminal justice referrals and take meaningful steps to close the school-to-prison pipeline.
5. Address racial disparities in identification of academically advanced students and identification and placement of students with disabilities.
6. Take meaningful measures to diversify educator hiring at the K-12 and postsecondary levels by reforming certification processes and New Jersey’s teacher pipeline.
7. Require anti-bias training for student athletes.
8. Fund programs for student-led anti-bias programming and coordinate best practices.
9. Encourage all K-12 school districts to designate a Chief Equity Officer.
10. Require anti-bias policies in all colleges and universities.
11. Encourage public and private postsecondary institutions designate a Chief Equity Officer.
12. Ensure that juveniles in state custody receive anti-bias programming as well.
13. Publish resources for schools, colleges, and universities on whole-school responses to bias incidents.

**Enforcement of Criminal and Civil Laws**

14. Improve specificity of bias incident data collection and publicly release data more frequently.
15. Make it easier for residents to report bias incidents to the Attorney General’s Office for civil or criminal investigation.
16. Continue aggressive criminal and civil enforcement of New Jersey’s bias laws.
17. Strengthen the State’s hate crime law.
18. Strengthen the civil and criminal remedies available to victims of bias-motivated conduct.
19. Hold accountable those who weaponize the Internet to harm others by addressing doxing and swatting.
20. Mandate completion of anti-bias education program for juvenile bias crime offenders.
21. Expand law enforcement training on cyberhate investigations and domestic extremism.
22. Consider investigations related to social media platforms.
23. Study potential amendments to Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act.

**Public Engagement**

24. Call out public figures who use hateful rhetoric.
25. Launch a statewide campaign to stand up to hate in New Jersey.
26. Establish an Incident Response Team within the Division on Civil Rights.
27. Create resource guides to educate parents and educators about how to talk to children about avoiding hate on the Internet and how to recognize signs of radicalization.

DCR welcomes your feedback and hopes you will join us in pursuing this new vision for New Jersey’s next generation!

**Ways to contact DCR:**
Phone: 1-833-NJDCR4U (711 relay)
Online: NJCivilRights.gov and https://bias.njcivilrights.gov to file a complaint
Email: CommunityRelations@NJCivilRights.gov
Social Media: Facebook and Twitter @CivilRightsNJ #CivilRightsNJ #StopTheHate
Racial Justice Resource for Educators and Parents

Note that these resources are not endorsed by DCR and this document does not constitute an endorsement of any particular book, author, article, podcast, website, talk, webinar, or any other resource.

Resources on Discussing the Capitol Attack With Children and Students

“Responding to the Insurrection at the U.S. Capitol” by Facing History
https://www.facinghistory.org/educator-resources/current-events/responding-insurrection-us-capitol

Helping Kids Understand the Riots at the Capitol (Spanish available)
https://childmind.org/blog/helping-kids-understand-the-riots-at-the-capitol/

How To Talk To Kids About The Riots At The U.S. Capitol Podcast/NPR article

6 Ways to Help Students Make Sense of the Capitol Siege
https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/6-ways-to-help-students-make-sense-of-the-capitol-siege/2021/01

“Leading Conversations After Crisis”
https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/leading-conversations-after-crisis

Resources for Addressing Bias, Anti-Racism and Intolerance with Children and Students

Educator Resources

A resource guide for talking about race and violence with kids, from the Center for Racial Justice in Education.

George Floyd lesson plan for K-8, from the Colorful Pages blog on multicultural literature.

Talking about Race and Racism Lesson Plan:
https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/lessons/talking-about-race-and-racism
Note that these resources are not endorsed by DCR and this document does not constitute an endorsement of any particular book, author, article, podcast, website, talk, webinar, or any other resource.

Facing History and Ourselves https://www.facinghistory.org/topics/race-us-history

Teaching Tolerance http://www.tolerance.org/


Talking to Kids About Racism and Justice: a list for parents, caregivers & educators https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s0lCA3FluJWhK6DFE2d3uYCipc6ApY8Gn2rMwm6fYqw/edit

“Responding to Hate and Bias at School” https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/responding-to-hate-and-bias-at-school


“Supporting Students through Coronavirus” https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/social-justice-standards

Parent Resources


“How White Parents can raise Anti-Racist White Kids” by https://resistmedia.org/2016/12/31/6-step-guide-raising-antiracist-white-kids/#.WG68anYlYSM.facebook

“100 Anti-Racist Things You Can Say To Your White Kids” by Raising Race Conscious Children http://www.raceconscious.org/2016/06/100-race-conscious-things-to-say-to-your-child-toAdvance-racial-justice/

“Talking to White Kids about Race and Racism” Podcast by Safe Space Radio https://safespaceradio.com/talking-to-white-kids-about-race-racism/?fbclid=IwAR0LDpeBjicVlc5XECwQ4YtLqjB-oD0pF52EDK-nUsHc1QGkkxEtuuPtyK3Y

“Talking about Race with Young Kids” NPR https://www.npr.org/2019/04/24/716700866/talking-race-with-young-children?fbclid=IwAR262i36JkNreR2IYq0pPPHDPL9u6iyHSVkmV2vrR3Edl-1oG-0ZIXKMrY
Note that these resources are not endorsed by DCR and this document does not constitute an endorsement of any particular book, author, article, podcast, website, talk, webinar, or any other resource.

“Raising White Kids” Author on How White Parents Can Talk About Race, NPR
https://www.npr.org/2020/05/31/866426170/raising-white-kids-author-on-how-white-parents-can-talk-about-race

“Having the Race Conversation with Your Kids” Dr. Ann Louise Lockhard & Ibram X Kendi.

Embrace Race http://www.embracerace.org/ online community to discuss and share best practices for raising and caring for kids in the context of race.

Raising Race Conscious Children: http://www.raceconscious.org

Talking to Kids About Racism and Justice: a list for parents, caregivers & educators
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s0ICA3FlulVhK6DFE2d3uYCipc6ApY8Gn2rMwm6fYqw/edit

“Being There for Non-Binary Youth”
https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2016/being-there-for-nonbinary-youth

“Digital Literacy”
https://www.tolerance.org/frameworks/digital-literacy

“Building Resilience & Confronting Risk in the COVID-19 Era”
https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/splc_peril_covid_parents_guide.pdf

Resources on Domestic Terrorism and Radicalization

“New Resources for Confronting White Nationalism”
https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/new-resources-for-confronting-white-nationalism

“Teach This: “The Hill We Climb” and the 2021 Inauguration”
https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/teach-this-the-hill-we-climb-and-the-2021-inauguration

“Combatting Online Youth Radicalization”
https://on24static.akamaized.net/event/29/71/87/7/rt/1/documents/resourceList1611688253705/com batingonlineyouthradicalizationsliddeckpdf1611688243600.pdf

“The Good Men Project”
https://goodmenproject.com/
Note that these resources are not endorsed by DCR and this document does not constitute an endorsement of any particular book, author, article, podcast, website, talk, webinar, or any other resource.

“Polarization and Extremism Research Innovation Lab”
https://www.american.edu/centers/university-excellence/peril.cfm

Common Sense Media
https://www.commonsensemedia.org/homepage

“Hate in the Homeland: The New Global Far Right”
https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691203836/hate-in-the-homeland


8 Signs of Terrorism
Brochure: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54d79f88e4b0db3478a04405/t/5a5f70b08165f524df7f4f1b/1516204210735/Eight+Signs+of+Terrorism+Tri-fold.pdf


Female HVEs Likely to Play Supportive Role for ISIS: https://www.njhomelandsecurity.gov/analysis/female-hves-likely-to-play-supportive-role-for-isis


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Online: NJCivilRights.gov and https://bias.njcivilrights.gov to file a complaint
Email: CommunityRelations@NJCivilRights.gov
Social Media: Facebook and Twitter @CivilRightsNJ
#CivilRightsNJ #StopTheHate
The New Jersey Division on Civil Rights thanks all community members for joining us for the #StopTheHate Series in April 2021.

Let’s re-imagine how to create a more equitable future.

Please visit our virtual exhibits to learn more about our work and help us continue to celebrate the anniversary of the Law Against Discrimination.

Links:

- DCR 75th Anniversary Exhibit
- Spotify #StopTheHate series song playlist!