

National Organization for Women of New Jersey



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 4, 2022

National Organization for Women of New Jersey calls for Acting Attorney General Platkin to investigate gender bias in recruitment by police departments

Women deserve respect and equal opportunity in law enforcement hiring practices

National Organization for Women of New Jersey (NOW-NJ) calls on New Jersey's Acting Attorney General Matthew Platkin to launch an investigation into possible gender biases in the hiring practices for law enforcement in Clark and to take appropriate action subsequently. New Jersey ranks [third highest in the nation in police salary](#) (with the average at \$123,000) but lags behind most of the nation at 32nd for female representation. In addition, as reported by the Asbury Park Press "[At the last count in 2016, one-third of the departments in the state employed no female police officers.](#)" This is clearly a result of gender discrimination in hiring practices that must be addressed by the chief law enforcement officer of the state.

The recent release of remarks by Clark's Mayor Bonaccorso, in which he stated that he would ensure that no female officers are hired under his watch, constitute a clear case of gender-based discrimination. In addition to his misogynist remarks, the history of racial slurs [revealed in audio recordings](#) are indefensible; and the conduct of governmental and law enforcement officials in the township that included the alleged payment of hush money is a serious betrayal of public trust. A full investigation of the Clark incidents and the lack of accountability by the Union County Prosecutor's office that took control of Clark's police department in 2020 is warranted.

"Misconduct in police departments, especially with regards to race and gender is nothing new. In Union County alone, we have seen similar cases come to light since 2018 in [Elizabeth](#) and [Mountainside](#) where I reside," said Anjali Mehrotra, President of NOW-NJ. "Placing scrutiny on hiring practices is a start, but real change needs to address the culture and hostile work environment often faced by female officers. We need a commitment to gender parity that will ensure leadership roles, safety and job-security for women in law enforcement."

About National Organization for Women of New Jersey (NOW-NJ)

The purpose of NOW New Jersey is to take action through intersectional, anti-racist grassroots activism to promote feminist ideals, lead societal change, eliminate discrimination, and achieve and protect the equal rights of all women and girls in all aspects of social, political, and economic life. For more information about NOW New Jersey, please visit www.nownj.org.

###

Media Contact- Anjali Mehrotra | president@nownj.org | 908-379-3642