

2021-2024

Civil Rights Division Highlights



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Message from the Assistant Attorney General

Since 1957, the Civil Rights Division has fought to uphold the civil and constitutional rights of all who live in America, especially the most vulnerable. We have worked to strengthen democracy, combat hate and exploitation, promote fairness and accountability in the criminal justice system, and expand opportunity and access for all.

Over the past four years, the Division made tremendous progress in advancing the cause of civil rights. The Division brought to justice those who harm, threaten, or intimidate people because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, English proficiency, or disability status. We prosecuted those who traffic, sexually assault, or abuse others. We held law enforcement agencies accountable when they violated the



rights of those they are sworn to protect. We worked to ensure that all people in America have an equal opportunity to learn, work, and live in communities that are safe, healthy, and free from discrimination. We protected people's right to worship as they please. We vigorously defended the right to vote. This report highlights some of that work.

The accomplishments outlined here are a testament to the tireless efforts of career employees in the Civil Rights Division's 11 sections, our partners in U.S. Attorneys' Offices and other Department of Justice components, and other federal agencies. They are also a testament to the courage and persistence of community members and advocates who stood up for their rights and bravely shared their concerns.

We extend sincere gratitude to those who have contributed to our efforts. Please take a moment to reflect upon the successes you have helped us achieve.

Kristen Clarke

Assistant Attorney General

Suita Clarke



Defeating Hate



Photo by Julie Vianello

Hate and related crimes harm individual victims and instill fear in the communities they target.

Our prosecutions send a powerful message that the federal government will hold perpetrators accountable and safeguard communities.

We have taken a whole-ofdepartment approach to combating hate crimes and often partner with U.S. Attorneys' Offices in prosecuting these cases.

- > We secured a conviction and 90 consecutive life sentences against the <u>Texas man</u> who killed 23 people and wounded 22 more at the Cielo Vista Walmart in El Paso, Texas — victims he targeted because they were <u>Hispanic</u> or <u>Mexican</u>. We also secured a conviction and sentence against a <u>North</u> <u>Carolina man</u> who hatefully attacked a <u>Hispanic</u> man who was at his own home and a <u>Black</u> man who was driving on a public street.
- > We secured convictions and sentences against the Georgia men who murdered Ahmaud Arbery, a young Black man, while he was jogging on public neighborhood streets.
- > We secured a guilty plea and prison sentence against a **Florida man** for attacking multiple **Black** women because of their race.

We combated hate crimes that target people and communities because of their race, ethnicity, or national origin.

- > We secured a 25-year prison sentence against a <u>Texas man</u> who violently attacked an **Asian** American family at a store because he blamed the family for the COVID-19 pandemic. And we obtained a guilty plea from a <u>Massachusetts man</u> who threatened to kill an **Asian American** man and his family because of their perceived race and national origin.
- > We obtained a guilty plea and prison sentence against a Kentucky man who hacked into a virtual fifth-grade classroom and used racial epithets to threaten the students and teachers, including threatening to "hang [them] from a tree."
- We prosecuted and obtained a guilty plea from a Maine man who sent racist death threats to his neighbors, a Black family residing in his apartment complex.
- > We secured prison sentences against a Michigan man and a New Jersey man, both members of the white supremacist group, "The Base," for conspiring with other members to victimize Black and Jewish people by vandalizing minority-owned properties throughout the country and defacing a Jewish synagogue in Hancock, Michigan, using swastikas and symbols associated with the white supremacist group.

We combated hate crimes that target people and communities because of their **religion**.

We prosecuted people who committed hate crimes against Muslims.

- > We secured a 37-year sentence against a <u>Texas man</u> for killing one person and attempting to kill four others during a targeted shooting spree after making anti-Muslim statements.
- > We secured a guilty plea from a <u>Florida man</u> who assaulted a Muslim postal worker by pulling her out of her truck and grabbing her neck while attempting to pull off her hijab.
- > We secured a guilty plea from a <u>New Jersey man</u> for breaking into the Center for Islamic Life at Rutgers University during the Eid holiday and destroying prayer stones, items with inscriptions of the Quran, and a Palestinian flag.
- > We secured a guilty plea from a **Florida man** who left voicemails with a Michigan Muslim civil rights organization threatening to kill Muslims.

We combated threats of violence targeting Sikhs.

We charged a <u>Texas man</u> who threatened to injure or kill the employees of a <u>Sikh</u> civil rights nonprofit organization.

We confronted acts of violence targeting Jewish communities.

- > We secured a conviction against a Pennsylvania man who killed 11 congregants and wounded seven others at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. The jury later unanimously recommended a death sentence against the man.
- > We secured a life sentence against the man who killed one person, injured three, and attempted to kill 50 others at the Poway Synagogue in California.
- We obtained a guilty plea from a <u>Michigan man</u> for making violent online threats to commit a mass shooting targeting Jewish people.
- > We obtained a guilty plea from a Cornell University student who made online threats to kill or injure Jewish students and secured a guilty plea from a Mississippi man who cyberstalked and made antisemitic threats targeting synagogues and Jewish-owned businesses.



AAG Clarke participated in the Federal Inter-Agency Holocaust Remembrance Program in 2024, hosted by the State Department. From left: Allan Hall, Sarah Morgenthau, Ruth Cohen, Kristen Clarke, Ellen Germain.

We prosecuted people who targeted Christian churches.

- > We secured a sentence against a <u>Colorado man</u> for setting fire and attempting to destroy a Christian church.
- > We secured a conviction against the man responsible for setting fire to four churches in Tennessee.
- > We secured a conviction against the man who set fire to a church in **Ohio**.
- > We secured an 11-year prison sentence against the man who attacked four Jehovah Witness Kingdom Halls in <u>Washington</u>.

We have combated hate and violence targeting **LGBTQI+ people** and communities because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

- > We secured a guilty plea and 55 life sentences against the <u>Colorado man</u> who killed five people and injured 19 others as part of the mass shooting at Club Q, an LGBTQI+ establishment in Colorado Springs.
- > We secured a conviction against the <u>South Carolina</u> man who murdered Dime Doe, a Black trans woman. This case is historic because the defendant is the first to be found guilty by a jury for a hate crime motivated by gender identity under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act.
- > We secured a prison sentence against a Texas man who threatened to burn a Boston doctor working at a national LGBTQI+ health center because the doctor provides gender-affirming care for youth. We also secured a sentence against an Ohio man who firebombed a church because it planned to host a drag show event.
- > We secured a 266-month sentence against a Missouri man for shooting a teenager eight times in an attempted murder because of the victim's LGBTQI+ status. We also secured a sentence against a Texas man who targeted victims using Grindr, an LGBTQI+ social media platform, to kidnap or carjack them, sometimes at gunpoint, because he believed the victims were gay.

Prosecuting Perpetrators of Sexual Assaults and Misconduct

Sexual misconduct by law enforcement and other government officials profoundly harms its victims and undermines integrity and trust in government.

We investigate and seek reforms in correctional facilities that fail to protect incarcerated people from sexual abuse, and we prosecute perpetrators of sexual misconduct to ensure accountability and uphold the standards of justice within government.

- > We prosecuted several cases under the 2022 reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and its enhanced penalties, including securing a conviction of a former police officer in the City of Savanna Police Department in Oklahoma for sexually assaulting a woman during a traffic stop and a former sheriff's deputy in Doña Ana County Sheriff's Office in New Mexico for sexually assaulting a woman arrestee inside his patrol car.
- > We secured a guilty plea and prison sentence against a former private <u>prisoner transport officer</u> for sexually assaulting several female pretrial detainees he was moving to the jurisdictions that issued warrants for their arrest.
- > We secured a first-of-its-kind conviction against the former <u>director</u> of sports medicine at San José State University for sexually abusing female studentathletes under the guise of providing medical treatment.

- > We obtained a conviction and prison sentence against a former Oregon Department of Corrections <u>nurse</u> who sexually assaulted nine women incarcerated at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, the only women's prison in Oregon.
- > We protected the rights of incarcerated women in the New Jersey Department of Corrections to be free from sexual assault and abuse and protected against retaliation for reporting assault and abuse by requiring the department to improve its supervision, reporting, and investigation systems and increase staff accountability and public transparency.
- > We are litigating a case against the State of Alabama and the Alabama Department of Corrections, alleging that conditions at 13 of Alabama's prisons for men violate the Constitution, including claims that the state fails to provide adequate protection from sexual abuse between incarcerated people.

Civil Rights Division's Efforts Against Sexual Misconduct

A Snapshot of impact since April 2022

\$16+ Million

Awarded to victims





9,400+

People trained



Countering Human Trafficking and Forced Labor



We secured convictions of multiple defendants on charges related to **sex trafficking**.

- > We secured the trial conviction and a 60-year prison sentence against an <u>Alabama man</u> for using physical violence to coerce several victims, including a minor, into prostitution over several years.
- > We secured a guilty plea and an over-30-year prison sentence against a <u>South Carolina man</u> for using physical beatings, threats, intimidation, and psychological manipulation to coerce multiple victims, including one minor, into committing commercial sex acts.
- > We secured a guilty plea from a <u>Massachusetts man</u> for using force, threats of force, and coercion to compel multiple victims to perform commercial sex acts.

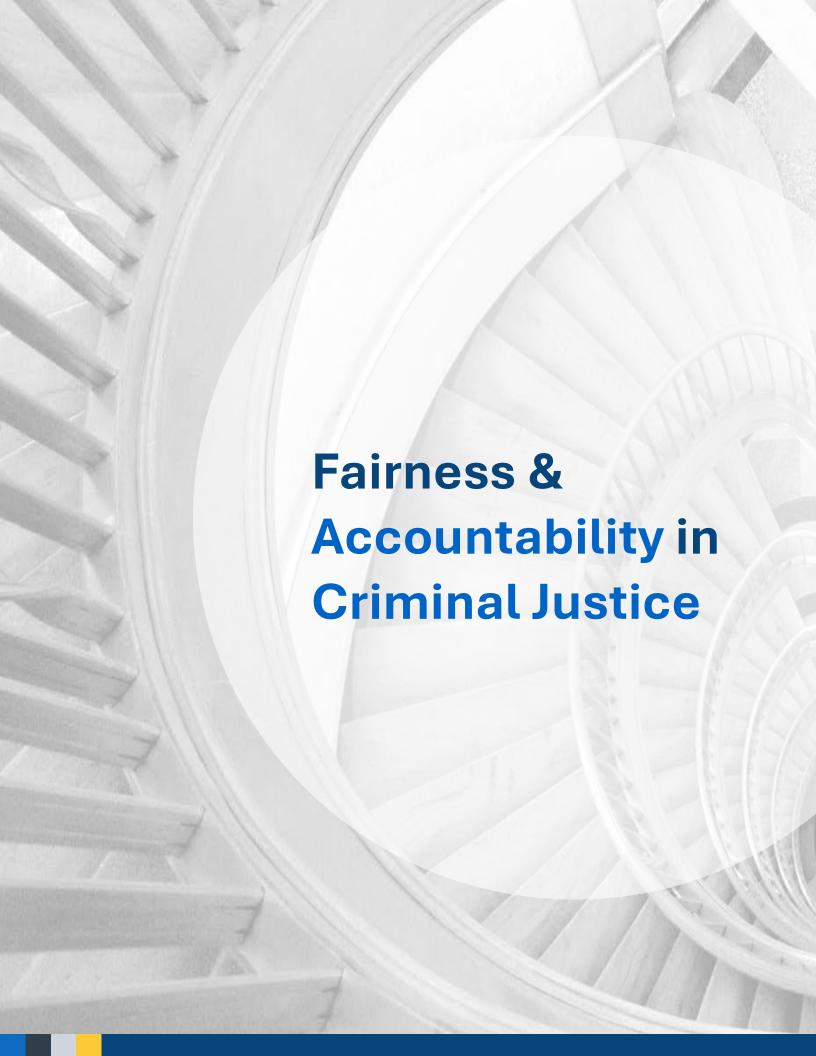
- > We secured a trial conviction and sentence of life in prison against a <u>California man</u> for using sexual assault, threats of violence, isolation, and emotional abuse to compel a victim to engage in commercial sex acts across the country.
- > We secured a trial conviction and sentence of life in prison against a <u>former priest</u> for manipulating fears of opioid withdrawal and homelessness to exploit minor students at a parochial school into performing commercial sex acts.
- > We secured the trial conviction of a Florida man who used violence and intimidation to compel nearly a dozen women and girls to perform commercial sex acts.

We also secured convictions of multiple defendants on charges related to **forced labor**.

- > We secured a trial conviction and a 35-year prison sentence against a Louisiana man who coerced multiple minors to work for his baking business through violence, sexual abuse, food deprivation, degradation, and intimidation.
- > We secured the trial conviction of a **Guatemalan national** who smuggled a child illegally into the country
 and then forced the child to work to pay off an alleged
 smuggling debt.
- > We secured a trial conviction and a 15-year prison sentence against a North Carolina nail salon **owner** for compelling the victim's forced labor through a variety of coercive means, including beating the victim with nail salon tools and brooms.

- > We secured trial convictions of six members of a **cult** who used the threat of negative eternal religious consequences and other forms of coercion to secure the forced labor of more than a dozen victims, including multiple minors.
- > Training. As part of the Justice Department's

 National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, we
 presented more than 60 anti-trafficking training
 programs to more than 6,000 participants from law
 enforcement, governmental and non-governmental
 organizations, and multilateral organizations.



Ensuring Effective and Fair Policing



Law enforcement agencies that permit systemic misconduct by their officers erode rights protected by the Constitution and undermine public trust and public safety. We investigate such agencies and seek significant reforms to enhance accountability and public trust.

We have investigated patterns and practices of policing that deprive people of their **constitutional rights**.

We opened **12 new pattern-or-practice investigations** against law enforcement agencies whose jurisdictions cover more than **17.8 million people**.

- > We identified aggressive policing deployed against Black people and people with disabilities at the Louisville Metro Police Department. Officers systematically violated the Constitution and federal law in how they used force, handled protests, and sought and executed search warrants.
- > We likewise found violations of the Constitution and federal law by the <u>City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Police Department</u>. There, officers used excessive force, discriminated against Black and Native American people and people with behavioral health disabilities, and violated the rights of people engaged in protected speech. Our detailed <u>report</u> gave voice to the experiences of Minneapolis residents harmed by officers sworn to protect them.
- > We also found that the Phoenix Police Department, one of the largest in the country, engaged in unlawful and unconstitutional practices that affect some of Phoenix's most vulnerable residents, including Black, Hispanic, and Native American people, homeless people, and those experiencing behavioral health crises. We also found that the department used excessive force, delayed necessary medical aid, and infringed on the civil rights of those engaged in First Amendment-protected conduct, including demonstrations and protests.
- > The nine other investigations cover city police or sheriff's departments in Lexington, Mississippi; Memphis, Tennessee; Mount Vernon, New York; New York City (Special Victims Division); Oklahoma City; Trenton, New Jersey; Rankin County, Mississippi; and the Louisiana State Police.
- > We have also participated in police-sponsored convenings hosted by a variety of groups, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement, and others.

Holding Law Enforcement Accountable

In addition to ensuring systemic reforms, we hold individual officers accountable to maintain trust and integrity. We prosecute law enforcement officers for individual abuses of power and the harm they inflict.

Since January 2021, we have obtained the convictions of over

180

law enforcement officers who willfully deprived people of their civil or constitutional rights.

- > We secured a 21-year prison sentence for Derek Chauvin, the Minneapolis Police Department officer who kneeled on George Floyd's neck for more than nine minutes in May 2020, leading to Mr. Floyd's death. Officer Chauvin pleaded guilty to two federal civil rights violations. The other three officers involved in the death (who stood by or pressed Mr. Floyd's unresisting body to the ground) were also convicted and sentenced.
- > We secured sentences ranging from 10 to 40 years for six law enforcement officers known as the "Goon Squad" in Rankin County, Mississippi, who burst into the home of two Black Mississippi men without probable cause, physically abused them, called them racial epithets, taunted them, tortured them, and shot one man in the face. The officers then tried to cover up these heinous acts.
- > We secured convictions against five former Memphis Police Department detectives for offenses connected with the death of Tyre Nichols, who was beaten after a traffic stop and later died of his injuries.

> We charged four current and former Louisville Metro Police Department officers with crimes related to the death of Breonna Taylor, including obstruction offenses for preparing and approving a false search warrant affidavit. Kelly Goodlett pleaded guilty to conspiring to falsify the affidavit and to lying to federal investigators after Ms. Taylor was killed. Brett Hankinson was convicted by a jury of violating Ms. Taylor's civil rights for firing five shots into her apartment.

We prosecuted law enforcement officers who discriminated against and violated the civil rights of those they were sworn to protect.

> We secured the trial conviction and sentence of nearly 9 years in prison for a former <u>Ohio sheriff's</u> <u>deputy</u> who pepper sprayed and repeatedly assaulted a man who was in a restraint chair that bound the man's hands behind his back and prevented him from being able to move most of his body.

Improving Conditions in Correctional Facilities

We protect people within the criminal and juvenile justice systems, including those in jails or prisons, focusing on addressing unconstitutional conditions.

- > We investigated the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections and found that the department violated the constitutional rights of thousands of incarcerated people by holding them beyond their release dates. We recommended remedial measures to improve information exchange and coordination among state law enforcement and corrections agencies, reform training, and upgrade technology.
- > We investigated the Fulton County Jail in Georgia and found that the jail violated the U.S. Constitution, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act by failing to protect people from the substantial risk of serious harm from violence, housing people in unsanitary and dangerous conditions, and failing to provide adequate medical and mental health services to incarcerated people, among other issues.
- > We investigated the Georgia Department of Corrections and found that its prisons violated the U.S. Constitution by failing to protect prisoners from widespread physical violence and unreasonable risk of sexual assault.

- > We investigated the <u>Texas Juvenile Justice</u> <u>Department</u> and found that five of its facilities violated the U.S. Constitution, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act by exposing children to excessive force and prolonged isolation, failing to protect children from sexual assault, and failing to provide adequate mental health services, among other issues.
- > We investigated the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and found that the department failed to keep children reasonably safe from harm. Incarcerated people routinely fought or bullied each other, and staff members used excessive force and dangerous tactics and punished victims of attacks by other inmates with isolation. Our settlement requires the department to change its staffing patterns, develop a positive behavior-management program to reduce youth-on-youth violence, increase video surveillance, improve its investigation process, and restrict the use of force or restraints to exceptional circumstances.



Achieving Equal Educational Opportunity

Every student in America has a right to an equal educational opportunity. We ensure that America's schools are safe and welcoming environments for all learners by enforcing several federal statutes that apply to education, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Confronting Racial Segregation and Discrimination

We combated segregation and racial discrimination in our nation's schools to fulfill the promise of the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

- > We expanded academic opportunities for students in St. Martin Parish, Louisiana, by requiring the parish to develop a robust magnet school to attract a diverse student body and desegregate a historically Black school zone.
- > We removed barriers to Black students' participation in gifted and advanced programs, corrected disciplinary policies that disproportionately affected Black students, and bolstered efforts to recruit and retain diverse teaching staff in Fayette County, Tennessee, and Madison County, Alabama.
- In Madison County, Kentucky, we confronted widespread racial harassment of Black and multiracial students, including use of the N-word and other racial slurs, and taunts using Confederate imagery. We secured reforms in the Hawkins County Schools in Tennessee in response to a mock "slave auction" to sell Black students to their white peers, students' repeated and open use of slurs, and a "monkey of the month" campaign to ridicule Black students. And we took action to protect Black and LGBTQI+ students in the Twin Valley School District in Vermont from student-on-student race-based and sex-based harassment.

- > We protected Black students at Highland Community College in Kansas by resolving discriminatory treatment of Black students in discipline, housing, and interactions with campus security officers.
- > We took action to stop severe and pervasive peer and staff harassment of Black and Asian American students in the **Davis School District in Utah**, where the district repeatedly failed to act on reports of racebased harassment, including racial taunts, slurs, and assaults. This included hundreds of documented instances of students using the N-word, making other derogatory racial comments, and physically assaulting students of color.
- > We secured reforms in the Wichita Public Schools in Kansas, where Black students were disciplined more frequently and more severely than white students who engaged in similar conduct and had similar backgrounds and disciplinary histories. This pattern was most evident when it came to subjective offenses such as insubordination, and it was especially stark when it came to the discipline of Black girls.

Combating Harassment and Other Discrimination on the Basis of Sex

We ensured that students could learn and participate in campus life without fear of discrimination or harassment based on sex.

- > We addressed failures by the <u>University of</u>

 <u>Maryland</u>, <u>Baltimore County</u> and <u>San José State</u>

 <u>University</u> to protect student-athletes from sexual harassment and assault by athletic personnel, including coaches and trainers. The two institutions agreed to pay up to \$4.14 million and \$1.6 million, respectively, in financial relief for people who experienced discrimination. The institutions are also undertaking significant changes to their policies and practices to prevent future abuse.
- > We secured campus-wide reforms at <u>Case Western</u>

 <u>Reserve University in Ohio</u> so students can attend school and participate in Greek life programming free from sex discrimination, including sexual assault, sex-based stalking, and retaliation for filing complaints of sex discrimination.
- > We created a safer learning environment for students in the Teton County School District in Wyoming and the Fulton County School District in Georgia, requiring these school districts to report and address complaints of sexual harassment and assault and to address vulnerabilities unique to students with disabilities.



Expanding Opportunities for English Learner Students

We took action to ensure that English learner students and their families receive the services they need to thrive.

- > We ensured that Clay County District Schools in Florida will properly assess English language learners, promptly provide them with language services, and give them an equal opportunity to benefit from the academic and behavioral services provided to their peers. We also required the district to provide language access to parents with limited English proficiency so they can fully participate in their children's education.
- > We secured an agreement with Newark Public Schools, New Jersey's largest school district, to correct its failure to adequately serve English language learners. The district must provide improved instruction and support and ensure better communication with parents. We reached similar agreements to protect English learners in Aiken County in South Carolina and Providence Public Schools in Rhode Island.



Gail Etienne, Leona Tate, Shaheena Simons, Franz Marshall, and AAG Kristen Clarke at the *Brown v. Board of Education* 70th anniversary commemoration.

Providing Safe Learning Environments for Students with Disabilities

We combated discrimination against students with disabilities.

> We addressed harmful and dangerous seclusion and restraint practices used against students with disabilities in Wichita, Kansas; Anchorage, Alaska; Spokane, Washington; Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and Frederick County, Maryland, by reaching agreements that eliminate the use of seclusion, overhaul restraint practices, and require training for staff on how to provide effective and appropriate behavior interventions and supports for students.



Preserving Equal Opportunity in the Workplace

Every worker in America deserves to be treated fairly and have an opportunity to pursue employment in any sector without discrimination or harassment. We work aggressively to root out employment discrimination wherever it occurs by enforcing critical federal laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Immigration and Nationality Act, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, and Americans with Disabilities Act.

Combating Sexual Harassment

We brought novel and impactful cases to protect workers from sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination on the basis of sex.

- > We ensured that the New York Executive Chamber would implement reforms to address a pattern or practice of sexual harassment and retaliation under former Governor Andrew Cuomo. These included creating new policies to handle complaints involving high-level executive chamber employees like the governor, developing and conducting robust training and antiretaliation programs, and evaluating the reforms' effectiveness.
- > We held the sheriff of Mobile County, Alabama, accountable for failing to take prompt and effective action when female corrections officers alleged severe and pervasive sexual harassment in the workplace by incarcerated men. We required the sheriff to pay \$2 million and reform the way the jail responds to incidents of sexual misconduct. This was our first case alleging that an employer violates federal employment anti-discrimination law when it fails to correct a sexually abusive work environment.
- > We ensured that the **Baltimore County Fire Department** would take prompt and appropriate actions to correct the hostile work environment experienced by its female employees. The fire department will overhaul its sexual harassment complaint investigation process, provide sexual harassment training to its employees, conduct a workplace climate survey to keep the workplace free of harassment, and compensate female employees harmed by the harassment.
- > We secured restrictions on a Schuylkill County,
 Pennsylvania elected official to prevent him from
 engaging in further sexual harassment of county
 employees. The county also agreed to retain a
 consultant to conduct a workplace climate
 survey, propose improvements to its equal
 employment opportunity policies, and develop a
 new anti-sexual harassment training program.

Confronting Discrimination by Public Safety Employers

We confronted racial and sex discrimination in police and fire departments.

- > We secured \$2.2 million in relief for female police officer candidates for the Pennsylvania State Police who were disproportionately screened out of its hiring pool using improper physical fitness tests. The state police also agreed to offer priority hiring, retroactive seniority, and leave accrual for dozens of qualified female applicants.
- > We required <u>Cobb County</u>, <u>Georgia</u>, to stop using credit checks and a written exam that discriminated against Black firefighter candidates, pay \$750,000 in back pay to wrongfully disqualified applicants, and hire up to 16 of those applicants with retroactive seniority.

Addressing Violations of the Immigration and Nationality Act

We took significant action to prevent employers from discriminating against workers based on their citizenship or immigration status.

- > We held Apple accountable for illegally discriminating in hiring and recruitment against U.S. citizens and certain non-U.S. citizens. We required Apple to pay up to \$25 million in back pay and civil penalties, the most significant award that the Justice Department has recovered under the anti-discrimination provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
- > We resolved claims that Facebook routinely discriminated against U.S. citizens and certain non-U.S. citizens by refusing to recruit or consider them for positions for which they were legally eligible. Facebook agreed to set aside \$9.5 million to compensate victims, pay a civil penalty of \$4.75 million, train its employees, and change how it recruits and hires.
- > We reached settlements with 31 employers who posted job ads with unlawful citizenship-status restrictions on Georgia Tech's job recruitment platform and with Georgia Tech itself. In some cases, the job ads blocked non-U.S. citizen students from applying. The employers and university agreed to pay more than \$2.5 million in civil penalties, undergo training, and change their recruiting practices.
- > We resolved claims that Kforce Inc. unlawfully discriminated against certain non-U.S. citizens in hiring by regularly distributing job advertisements that excluded them based on their citizenship status. Kforce agreed to pay \$920,000 in damages, train its personnel, and revise its employment policies.



We processed over **50,800 calls** raising immigration-related employment issues through **our Employer and Worker Hotlines**. In those instances, we helped resolve many problems before employees filed charges. During that time, we preserved the jobs of at least **1,000 workers**, creating more than **\$28.5 million** in economic value.

Protecting Workers from LGBTQI+ Discrimination

We have addressed workplace discrimination that targets LGBTQI+ employees because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

> Among other cases, we vindicated the rights of a transgender woman and former employee of the American Samoa Government whom her boss harassed, including by referring to the woman as a "thing" and telling her in meetings to "[t]ake it off" and "let us see if you are a woman." The American Samoa Government compensated the former employee, adopted new policies and procedures to handle sex-based discrimination complaints, and trained its employees on these new policies.



The American Samoa Government must compensate Simeonica Tuiteleleapaga \$125,000 for the harassment she suffered at the hands of her supervisor.

Advocating for Workplace Protections

We successfully argued before the **U.S. Supreme Court** and several U.S. courts of appeals that they should interpret and apply Title VII of the Civil Rights Act's **employment anti-discrimination provisions** more broadly.

- > We successfully <u>argued</u> in multiple briefs before the Supreme Court that employees need not show heightened harm to prevail under Title VII's employment anti-discrimination provisions, thereby making those critical protections available to more employees. These cases culminated in a decision, *Muldrow v. St. Louis*, in which the Supreme Court agreed with our arguments.
- > We successfully argued before the Fifth Circuit in Hamilton v. Dallas County that employees do not have to show additional, tangible harm to prove they are victims of workplace discrimination.

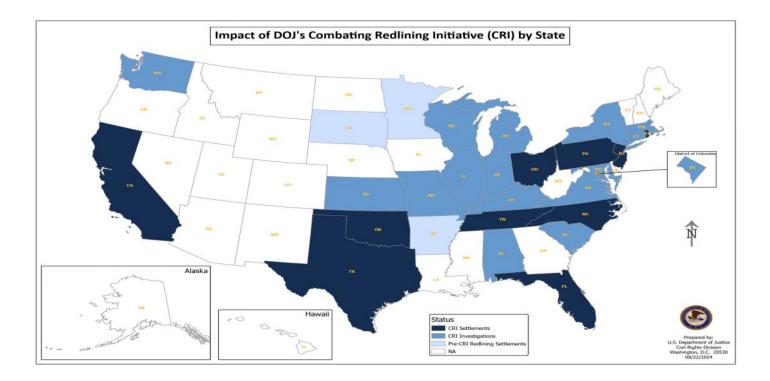
Where people live is central to many parts of daily life, including access to transportation, education, employment, healthcare, and a safe environment. Homeownership is also a meaningful way to build wealth and financial security. We ensured that people could enjoy their housing of choice without discrimination and obtain fair access to credit, including home mortgages and auto financing.

We secured over \$150 million in relief for communities of color that have faced lending discrimination by banks or mortgage lenders (redlining), resulting in more than \$1 billion in new economic opportunities for these affected communities.



Fighting Modern Day Redlining

Our Combating Redlining Initiative, launched in 2021, has made transformative progress in advancing economic opportunities for communities of color in Birmingham, Alabama; Columbus, Ohio; Houston; Jacksonville, Florida; Los Angeles, California; Memphis, Tennessee; Newark, New Jersey; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Tulsa, Oklahoma; throughout Rhode Island; and elsewhere. Redlining is the unlawful practice of denying residents in communities of color equal access to credit because of race, color, or national origin. Our many settlements included those listed on the next page.



- > We reached a \$20 million agreement with Trident Mortgage Company to address allegations of redlining in the Philadelphia metropolitan area, in coordination with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the attorneys general of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. This was the first redlining settlement with a non-bank lender and the second largest in the department's history.
- > We achieved a landmark \$31 million settlement with City National Bank, the largest bank headquartered in Los Angeles and one of the top 50 banks in the United States. This settlement is the largest ever secured by the Justice Department against a bank for redlining.

Combating Discrimination in AI and Automated Systems

> We used civil rights laws to ensure that new technologies did not perpetuate discrimination when we reached a groundbreaking settlement with Meta Platforms Inc. (formerly Facebook) to address allegations of advertising practices that violated the Fair Housing Act. This lawsuit, the first to challenge algorithmic discrimination under the FHA, revealed that Meta's ad delivery system determined who saw certain housing ads based on users' race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin. Under the settlement, Meta will develop a new system to eliminate biases in housing ads.

We filed **26 cases** alleging **sexual harassment in housing** since 2021.

> We held the landlord of hundreds of rental units in Elizabeth, New Jersey, accountable for the more than 15 years he spent sexually harassing male and female tenants and housing applicants. The landlord may not own or manage rental properties in the future; he also paid over \$4.3 million in monetary damages to 57 victims.

Our Sexual Harassment in
Housing Initiative, launched in
2017, has continued to seek
justice for tenants and housing
applicants who have
experienced sexual harassment
at the hands of landlords,
property managers,
maintenance workers, loan
officers, or other people who
have control over housing.

- > We vindicated the rights of tenants in **Boston**whose landlord, the owner and operator of
 residential sober homes, had sexually harassed
 them, including by offering to forgive rent in
 exchange for engaging in sex acts or sending
 sexually explicit photos. A federal jury awarded
 \$3.8 million to seven victims of the landlord's
 egregious conduct.
- > We secured a jury trial award of monetary damages for six women in Lexington, Tennessee, whose landlord harassed and retaliated against them. He made vulgar sexual comments, physically touched them in a unwelcomed ways, propositioned them for sex, and offered to reduce rent in exchange for sex. After trial, the court imposed a civil penalty and injunctive relief prohibiting the landlord from managing rental properties in the future.
- > We filed 11 lawsuits alleging sexual harassment in housing in 2023, more than any prior year. These cases, filed in federal courts spanning the country from California to Maine, reflect our commitment to hold property managers and landlords accountable when they abuse their power by preying on vulnerable tenants.

Addressing Discriminatory Programs and Ordinances

> We secured a landmark agreement with the City of Hesperia, California, and the San Bernardino County, California, sheriff's department to end its "crime-free" rental housing program. The program screened out or evicted tenants who engaged in alleged "criminal activity"—regardless of whether those allegations resulted in an arrest, charge, or conviction resulting in discrimination. The agreement also required the city and the sheriff's department to spend \$950,000 to compensate people harmed by the program and to fund affirmative marketing to promote fair housing and partnerships with community-based organizations.

Addressing Discriminatory Zoning and Land Use Practice

> We removed racially discriminatory barriers against low-income housing in **Franklinton, Louisiana**, after the town denied zoning for a low-income housing tax credit development that would have disproportionately served Black residents and would have been built in a predominantly white neighborhood. We required the town to develop new affordable housing, rezone land for affordable housing, establish a land donation program, and pay damages and penalties.

Remedying Discrimination in Places of Public Accommodations

> We protected the rights of Native Americans in Rapid City, South Dakota. There, the president of the **Grand Gateway**, a hotel and sports bar, stated that the establishment would not accept Native American patrons, and the hotel turned away Native Americans who attempted to book rooms. We required the Grand Gateway to apologize, change its policies, conduct outreach to Native Americans, and make other changes.

Protecting People with Disabilities

Ensuring accessibility and combating discrimination against people with disabilities is a top priority for the Justice Department. We have enacted new regulations, provided robust technical assistance, and pursued resolutions with covered entities.

New Web Accessibility Rule

To ensure the accessibility of web content and mobile applications for people with disabilities, the Justice Department issued a **final rule** under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in April. The rule clarifies the obligations of state and local governments to make their websites and mobile applications accessible. It will help ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to a full range of government services, including critical activities like voting, taking online courses, applying for public benefits, filing taxes, and more.

New Medical Diagnostic Equipment Accessibility Rule

The Justice Department issued a **final rule** under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to improve access to medical diagnostic equipment (MDE) for people with disabilities. MDE includes equipment like medical examination tables, weight scales, dental chairs, x-ray machines, and mammography machines. The rule clarifies how public entities that use MDE, such as public hospitals and health care clinics operated by state or local governments, can meet their obligations under the ADA. This rule will help ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to medical care.

Fighting Discrimination Resulting from Avoidable Contact with Law Enforcement

Many state and local governments rely on law enforcement officers to respond to situations involving people with behavioral or mental health disabilities. We worked to change this.

- > We called on Louisville, Minneapolis, and Phoenix to stop automatically sending law enforcement to respond to calls for which a person's mental health caused concern but posed no threat to public safety. Louisville and Minneapolis have agreed to work with us to correct these practices.
- > We ensured that people with mental illness in Alameda County, California, avoid unnecessary hospitalizations, police interactions, and incarceration by requiring the county to increase its community-based mental health services.

Protecting People with Disabilities from Discrimination

We addressed **disability discrimination** in various areas involving public and private entities through investigations and enforcement.

Over 65,000:

The number of Uber users who were improperly charged wait time fees due to their disabilities. Our settlement with **Uber** compensates these people and requires Uber to end its wait-time fee policy for people with disabilities and their riding companions.

- > We secured a landmark agreement with the City of Anoka, Minnesota, to resolve allegations that the city's enforcement of its "crime-free" housing ordinance unlawfully denied tenants with mental health disabilities an equal opportunity to receive emergency assistance. We required the city to correct discriminatory practices and pay \$175,000 in compensation.
- > We secured settlement agreements with four Texas counties—Colorado, Runnels, Smith, and Upton—to resolve our findings that the counties maintain election websites that discriminate against people with vision or manual disabilities.
- > We reached an agreement with an <u>Oklahoma</u> state agency to ensure that any mobile apps it creates, including for a virtual driver's license, will be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

- We ensured that incarcerated people with hearing disabilities in Wisconsin Department of
 Corrections facilities have auxiliary aids and services so they can equally access prison educational, medical, and other programs.
- > We reached agreement with the <u>City of Miami</u> <u>Beach</u> to ensure that when hiring police officers, it conducts medical examinations of candidates only after a conditional offer of employment is made.
- > We ensured that blind people in <u>Arizona prisons</u> can communicate effectively using Braille, audio recordings, or screen reader software to equally access prison educational, medical, and other programs.

Over 15,000:

The number of CVS, Rite Aid,
Kroger, Meijer, and Hy-Vee
pharmacy and store locations at
which people with disabilities can
now independently and privately
schedule health care
appointments using accessible
website appointment scheduling.

Increasing Physical Accessibility

Despite the ADA's passage over 30 years ago, accessibility barriers still block access for some people with disabilities to many of America's physical spaces. We continued to dismantle these barriers in a range of spaces around the country.

- > We secured a settlement with the <u>Chicago Cubs</u> to ensure that Wrigley Field provides full and equal access to fans who use wheelchairs.
- > We ensured that people with disabilities in Virginia

 Beach, Virginia, which has one of the highest

 concentrations of veterans in the county, can

 access city buildings, sidewalks, emergency

 services, the city's website, and other programs.
- We ensured that students with disabilities, including veterans at two community colleges in Texas with significant veteran populations—
 Central Texas College of Killeen and Tidewater
 Community College—can safely and efficiently move around campus facilities, including classrooms, dormitories, libraries, restrooms, and parking areas.

Independent Living for People with Disabilities

The ADA requires covered entities to provide healthcare services for people with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate to each person's needs.

- > We won a victory for families in **Florida** by showing that the state violated the ADA by not providing healthcare services to children with medical complexities in the community so that they could live at home with their families.
- > We reached an agreement with <u>Colorado</u> to provide healthcare services to adults with physical disabilities, including older adults, in their homes and communities.
- > We successfully secured a landmark settlement agreement in Oregon that addressed the state's provision of employment services for people with disabilities. Under the settlement, more than 1,100 workers got jobs in the community, where they worked with non-disabled peers and earned competitive wages. At least 7,000 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including 4,900 youth who finished school, have now received the state services they need to work.
- > We enforced existing settlement agreements in Georgia, New Hampshire, Louisiana, Virginia, New York, Rhode Island, West Virginia, North Dakota, and Puerto Rico that enable thousands of people with disabilities to live, work, and thrive in their own homes and communities instead of being relegated to and isolated in institutional settings.



Cayden Armour, with his father, Conlan Armour. The Armours fought against the institutionalization of Cayden. (Photo: The Armour family)

A person's ability to live a healthy life should not be dictated by race or **ZIP code**. We took action around the country to protect **communities** unjustly affected by health and sanitation hazards.

- > We secured a groundbreaking settlement to ensure that Black residents of Lowndes County, Alabama, have access to safe and effective septic and wastewater management systems. We found that the Alabama Department of Public Health's enforcement of sanitation laws threatened county residents with criminal penalties and even potential property loss for sanitation conditions the residents could not alleviate.
- > We worked with Houston, Texas, to combat illegal dumping that exposed residents to discarded tires, bags of trash, rotting carcasses, infected soils, and contaminated groundwater. As a result, Houston's One Clean Houston initiative now directs millions of dollars for rapid cleanup and better enforcement, prevention, and education.



Illegal dump site, Houston, Texas, January 2023

Acquiring Access to Health Care



Access to health care is a right that should be safeguarded for everyone. We are committed to enforcing laws that ensure safe access to reproductive healthcare services, provide medically necessary care for transgender people, and protect access to medication for people with opioid use disorder.

We have <u>prosecuted</u> 57 people in 25 criminal cases under the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE), including in <u>California</u>, <u>Illinois</u>, <u>Michigan</u>, <u>New York</u>, <u>Ohio</u>, <u>Oregon</u>, <u>Pennsylvania</u>, <u>Tennessee</u> and <u>Washington</u>, <u>DC</u>.

Ensuring Safe Access to Reproductive Healthcare Services

We enforced **FACE**, which prohibits blocking a person's access to reproductive health services, while **preserving the right to protest** under the **First Amendment**.

- > We obtained guilty pleas and sentences against men in <u>California</u> and <u>Illinois</u> who firebombed Planned Parenthood facilities because those facilities provided reproductive healthcare services.
- > We prosecuted people who have targeted pregnancy resource centers, including an <u>Ohio</u> man for damaging and defacing a center and three <u>Florida</u> residents for intimidating employees of pregnancy resource centers.
- > We obtained convictions and sentences against 10
 people who traveled from different states to interfere
 with access to a Washington, D.C., reproductive
 healthcare clinic, which prevented patients in
 immediate need of medical treatment from
 accessing care, by forcefully entering the clinic and
 blocking the doors using their bodies, furniture,
 chains, and ropes and by injuring a nurse.
- > We held national FACE Act trainings for local law enforcement agencies. These trainings covered how to respond when investigating incidents involving reproductive healthcare centers and provided resources for local law enforcement agencies to use with their federal partners.



Reproductive Rights Task Force

Based on stereotypes, stigma, and misunderstanding of medical science, people with opioid use disorder (OUD) are too often denied access to lawfully prescribed medications that are critical to treating their addiction, which only worsens the ongoing opioid epidemic. We took significant actions to dismantle barriers to treatment.



- > We resolved allegations that the <u>Unified Judicial</u> <u>System of Pennsylvania</u> (UJS) violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by preventing people under court supervision from taking lawfully prescribed medication to treat OUD. We required UJS to pay \$100,000 to victims, encourage all its courts to adopt new policies, and train personnel on the ADA's anti-discrimination requirements for OUD.
- > We increased access to OUD medication through multiple agreements with jails and prisons, including those in <u>Allegheny County</u>, <u>Pennsylvania</u>; <u>Eastern</u> <u>Kentucky</u>; and <u>Massachusetts</u>.
- > We confronted other discriminatory barriers to treatment for OUD, including barriers related to employment (in Cumberland County, Tennessee), professional licensing (in Indiana), social services (in Colorado), and healthcare (in Massachusetts).

Ensuring Access to Medically Necessary Healthcare

We fought to ensure that all people have access to medically necessary care, including medically necessary gender-affirming care, in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, relying on the Supreme Court's decision in Bostock v. Clayton County.

Improving Language Access for People with Limited English Proficiency

Everyone in our multilingual democracy deserves to participate fully in civic and public life. We ensure that language barriers do not prevent access to critical government services and programs and integration into our democracy.

Language Access in the Legal System

> We worked with state courts in Oklahoma, Colorado, New Jersey, Texas, Florida, North Carolina, Washington, and South Dakota, and we <u>convened</u> state court leaders and stakeholders on language access. We also issued a fact sheet on language access in the courts.

Law Enforcement Language Access Initiative

> We launched a Law Enforcement Language Access Initiative to assist law enforcement with ensuring that they can communicate with people with limited English proficiency. We secured language compliance agreements with the Denver Police Department and with sheriff's offices in the state of Washington; Dane County, Wisconsin; and Alameda County, California.

Language Access in Schools

> We secured an agreement with the Cherry Creek
School District, one of the largest school districts in Colorado, to resolve allegations that the district failed to communicate with parents in a language they could understand, denying them essential information about their children's education.

Training and Convenings

> We amplified these voluntary compliance actions by hosting a **convening** with law enforcement agencies nationwide to discuss their efforts to address language barriers in policing and to build effective language access programs. We also sent a **letter** to and hosted a training **webinar** for law enforcement agencies to help them meet their obligations to provide language assistance to people with limited English proficiency and to provide effective communication to deaf and hard-of-hearing people. We also presented these issues with law enforcement partners at major national law enforcement conferences.

Cultivating Religious Freedom

The freedom to practice our religion of choice without fear, intimidation, or harm is a bedrock principle of our nation. We enforce laws that prevent and address religious discrimination in schools, housing, places of public accommodation, prisons, and workplaces.

We protected religious land use rights—including the right to buy, rent, and use land for worship and religious exercise—by enforcing the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) and Fair Housing Act (FHA).

- > We challenged zoning laws that burdened Jewish communities' religious exercise rights to build synagogues in Millburn and Toms River, New Jersey, and in Hawaii County, Hawaii; schools in Jackson, New Jersey; and homes in Forestburgh, New York. We also ensured that people in Jewish communities could rightfully worship in their own homes in Airmont, New York.
- > We supported the religious exercise rights of Christian groups to provide food to people experiencing homelessness or hunger by challenging restrictive zoning laws in Santa Ana, California; Brookings, Oregon; and San Luis, Arizona. We also ensured religious groups could lawfully build churches in Walthill, Nebraska.
- > We secured a Muslim community's right to develop a religious cemetery after Stafford County, Virginia, enacted an ordinance that prevented the community from using the land despite the county having confirmed that the proposed cemetery was permitted at this property. We also negotiated damages and other relief for a Muslim seminary that was twice denied zoning approval to develop a religious educational institution and associated housing in Hendricks County, Indiana.
- > Religious freedom rights do not end at incarceration.¹ We supported the rights of Muslim men in the custody of the Arkansas Department of Corrections to wear kufis and to participate in congregational Jumu'ah prayers. We expanded opportunities for group religious practice by minority faith groups in the Connecticut State Department of Correction and the Michigan Department of Corrections, both of which had limited group practice of religion.

¹"RLUIPA... protects institutionalized persons who are unable freely to attend to their religious needs and are therefore dependent on the government's permission and accommodation for exercise of their religion." *Cutter v. Wilkinson*, 544 U.S. 709, 720 (2005) (Ginsburg, J.)



- > We secured a preliminary injunction against the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's policy of denying religious accommodations for correctional officers of several faiths, including Sikhs and Muslims, who wear facial hair as an expression of their faith.
- > We required the <u>City of Lansing, Michigan</u> to pay a detention officer \$50,000 after it fired her for requesting a religious accommodation not to work on the Sabbath.
- > We also supported the rights of a Muslim woman working in New York State's <u>Department of</u>
 <u>Corrections and Community Supervision</u> after the department denied her request that she remove her hijab in front of a woman supervisor instead of a man so as not to violate her religious practice.



Democracy and the Right to Vote

The right to vote is the bedrock of our democracy. We use all available tools to fight unlawful limits on voting rights and to counter voter discrimination and suppression across the country.



We filed **60** statements of interest and amicus briefs to protect voting rights in the Supreme Court; the First, Third, Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh circuit courts of appeal; federal district courts in Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin; the Wisconsin Court of Appeals; and a Wisconsin county court.

Defending the Constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act

> We vigorously defended the Act's voter intimidation, threats, and coercion provisions (Fair Fight v. True the Vote), Section 2's ban on racial discrimination in voting, like discriminatory re-districting plans (Alpha Phi Alpha v. Raffensperger and Nairne v. Ardoin), and Section 202's provisions protecting absentee voting rights in presidential elections (IATSE v. Mashburn).

Defending the Private Rights of Action Under Voting Laws

> We supported private citizens' rights to challenge practices under the Voting Rights Act and other voting rights laws by filing briefs in federal trial courts in Alabama (2), Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia (2), Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Pennsylvania (2) and Texas; and in the Third, Fifth, Eighth, and Eleventh circuit courts of appeals.

Enforcing Voting Rights Laws

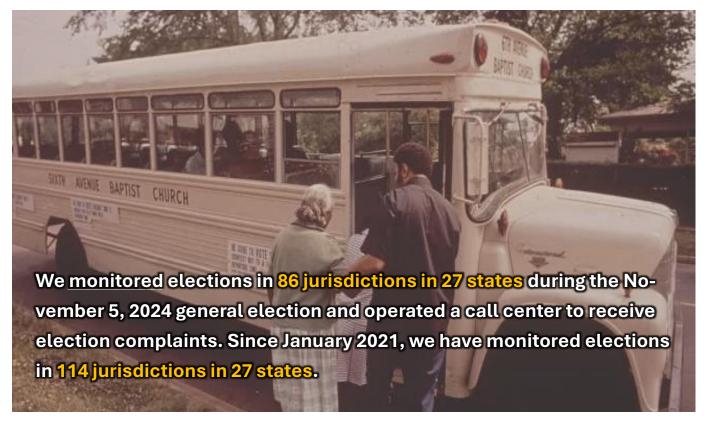
> We successfully challenged an <u>Arizona law</u> requiring people registering to vote to list their birthplace and provide proof of citizenship.

We challenged restrictive voting laws enacted by states and counties nationwide.

> In <u>Texas</u>, we challenged the statewide redistricting plan, which we allege denies or abridges the rights of eligible Latino and Black Americans to vote. In a <u>different case</u>, we challenged Texas's restrictions on voter assistance at the polls, including laws that prohibit assistance for voters with disabilities or for those who cannot read or write.



AG Garland, AAG Clarke, and civil rights leaders walk across the Edmund Pettis Bridge on the anniversary of 'Bloody Sunday.'



Sixth Avenue Baptist Church bus transporting Black voters to the polls on Primary Election Day, 1972. (National Archives: 545370)

- In Georgia, we challenged several restrictive state voting procedures, like banning government entities from distributing unsolicited absentee ballot applications, shortening the deadline to request an absentee ballot, prohibiting food or water distribution to people waiting in line to vote, and others.
- In Oneida County, New York, we ensured that the county would process voter registrations submitted before the deadline for federal elections and promptly include qualified voters on the rolls for federal elections.
- In Alabama and Virginia, we challenged voter removal programs, which we allege violate the National Voter Registration Act's prohibition on systematic voter removal programs within 90 days of a federal election.

Ensuring Language Accessibility for Voters

We protected the voting rights of people who speak primarily a language other than English in <u>Union</u> <u>County, New Jersey</u>, and <u>Pawtucket, Rhode</u> <u>Island</u>.

Ensuring Access for Voters with Disabilities

In New Jersey, we safeguarded the rights of voters with disabilities to broadly access voter registration opportunities through paratransit and other statefunded disability transportation services.



We work to safeguard the rights of and ensure fair treatment for the brave people of our nation's armed forces, their families, and the veterans who have served in the past.

Defending the Rights of Deployed Servicemembers and their Families

Service members and their families should never be penalized because their service to our country disrupts their employment. We advocated vigorously to protect their rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

- > We filed a ground-breaking lawsuit against Prince George County, Virginia, and the Virginia Retirement System for failing to rehire Virginia Army National Guard Major Mark Gunn as a detective and award him proper pension credits and payments when he returned from active duty.
- > We required the <u>City of Chicago</u> to give U.S. Army Reservist Derrick Strong lost wages and retroactive seniority after it had prevented him from taking an exam that would have made him eligible for a promotion.
- > We supported the rights of a military spouse who alleged that **Texas** denied her request that the state recognize her out-of-state school counseling licenses. A court ruled that Texas violated the law, and the state issued a license to the plaintiff.

Protecting the Property and Credit of Servicemembers

We secured an agreement from **GM Financial**, under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), to pay \$3.5 million to 71 servicemembers after it illegally repossessed their vehicles and denied or mishandled more than 1,000 vehicle lease termination requests. GM also agreed to repair the servicemembers' credit and provide SCRA training to its employees.

Safeguarding Voting Rights of Military Servicemembers and Others

In Ohio, we vindicated the rights of military servicemembers, their families, and U.S. citizens living overseas to participate fully in the May 2022 federal primary election. Our agreement with the state remedied its violation of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act.



Servicemembers and Veterans Initiative

In addition to filing lawsuits and taking other legal action, we conducted robust outreach, training, and coordination to **enhance protections for servicemembers, veterans, and their families**.

- > We conducted over 60 outreach events for legal service providers and advocacy groups, servicemembers, veterans, and their families regarding their federal legal rights. For servicemembers and veterans themselves, we conducted 45 outreach events.
- > We <u>launched an inter-departmental</u>
 <u>committee</u> to coordinate enforcement,
 conduct outreach, and share resources about
 the rights of servicemembers, veterans, and
 their families.
- > We issued <u>public guidance</u> about a new provision in the SCRA that allows servicemembers and their spouses to use their professional licenses and certificates when they relocate due to military orders. We also issued a <u>fact sheet</u> and <u>letter</u> to state licensing authorities.



Building Trust with Diverse and Underserved Communities

Engaging directly with communities is crucial for our mission to promote justice and equality. We do this by convening interested parties in Washington, D.C., visiting underserved communities nationwide, and developing educational materials.

Convening Interested Parties in D.C.

Through meetings, we ensure that our efforts are informed by those most affected by civil rights issues. These interactions allow us to hear and address diverse communities' specific concerns and perspectives and help identify pressing civil rights issues that might otherwise go unnoticed.

- > We convened quarterly meetings with <u>Jewish</u> and <u>Muslim</u>, <u>Arab</u>, <u>South Asian</u>, <u>Sikh</u>, <u>and Hindu</u> community leaders. We also held regular meetings with advocates from the disability rights, voting rights, and fair housing communities to discuss pressing civil rights issues and to provide them with resources.
- > We trained our U.S. Attorney partners on how to host <u>United Against Hate</u> programs in various settings, including houses of worship, schools and universities, libraries, art galleries, and community centers. These trainings aim to strengthen the dialogue and connections between federal, state, and local law enforcement and communities, including religious groups, educational institutions, advocacy organizations, civil rights groups, chambers of commerce, and others.
- > We <u>hosted</u> a virtual conference for over 1,300 attendees to highlight the *United Against Hate* effort. The event marked the 25th anniversary of the tragic, bias-motivated murders of James Byrd Jr. and Matthew Shepard.

We developed and, with our U.S. Attorney partners, launched the *United Against Hate*Community Outreach and Engagement

Program, which has reached more than

18,500 people across more than 550 events in all 94 U.S. Attorneys' Offices.



The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of North Carolina and law enforcement officials met with representatives from the Sikh community at the Gurdwara Khalsa Darbar in Charlotte, NC.

We sent more than **200 letters** to large landlords, mortgage servicers, state licensing authorities, and auto finance companies serving sizeable military bases to explain the **financial rights of servicemembers and veterans**.

- > We commemorated the 15th anniversary of the Shepard-Byrd Hate Crimes Prevention Act by hosting an event with the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law, a Historically Black College or University (HBCU). The event featured a case conversation with the trial team that prosecuted *United States v. Daqua Ritter*, the first case tried under the Shepard-Byrd Act involving violence against a transgender person.
- > We <u>honored</u> the 70th anniversary of the Supreme
 Court's *Brown v. Board* decision with a convening at
 the Department of Justice. The event included
 remarks from Attorney General Merrick Garland and
 Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona as well as
 discussion panels with members of the "New
 Orleans Four," who, as little girls, desegregated New
 Orleans Public Schools.

Educating the Public

We provided critical information about civil rights laws and protections, ensuring people understand their rights and can advocate for themselves effectively. By directly educating diverse groups through inperson events, hotlines, fact sheets, and online resources, we empower people to participate in and achieve just outcomes.



Visiting Underserved Communities

- > Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke embarked on an impactful 'civil rights tour' through the Deep South and other areas with underserved communities—from small rural communities like Selma, Alabama, and Indianola, Mississippi, to larger metropolitan areas such as Atlanta and Los Angeles. AAG Clarke visited Alabama, Arkansas, California, Maryland, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and elsewhere, where she heard directly from affected communities and shared with them the Justice Department's efforts to protect civil rights.
- > This tour included meetings with students from high schools, colleges, and universities— especially HBCUs—and discussions with community leaders, local and state officials, and advocates. At each stop, we engaged deeply with community leaders and members, gaining insights into various civil rights issues, including hate crimes, law enforcement accountability, redlining, voting rights, disability rights, and educational disparities. This direct engagement highlighted the crucial role of our work in addressing the unique challenges underserved communities face.
- > These listening sessions raised our awareness of on-the-ground concerns, which we evaluated and which led to tangible actions. For example, in Jackson, Mississippi, we heard harrowing accounts from families and victims affected by physical and sexual violence and misconduct by the Rankin County Sheriff's Office. This led to prosecutions of the self-described "Goon Squad" and to a pattern-or-practice investigation of Rankin County. We also investigated the Lexington, Mississippi, police department on the basis of what we learned from local community members.



Student leaders at Philander Smith College during the 'Civil Rights Tour.'

We traveled across the country to meet communities where they are located, listen to their concerns, and address pressing civil rights issues directly. When we are responsive to community input, our work becomes more effective and grounded in the real experiences of those we serve, leading to more robust and just outcomes for all.



The Las Vegas-based Chef Jeff Project is a culinary program that empowers justice-involved youth by teaching life skills, leadership, and entrepreneurship.

We were instrumental in overseeing the development and implementation of critical civil rights regulations, complying with executive orders, engaging with Congress, and equipping federal civil rights professionals with the necessary training to uphold strong anti-discrimination measures across multiple sectors.

Regulations

We worked closely with the Department of Education on its new Title IX regulation and with the Department of Health and Human Services on its new regulations under Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

AI/Civil Rights

Pursuant to President Biden's Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence, the Civil Rights Division convened civil rights agency leadership across government to discuss the comprehensive use of federal agencies' authority to prevent and address discrimination in the use of automated systems; increase coordination between the Division and federal civil rights offices on AI issues; improve external stakeholder engagement to promote public awareness of potential discriminatory uses and effects of AI; and develop, as appropriate, additional training, technical assistance, guidance, or other resources.

U.S. Attorney's Office Civil Rights Enforcement Program

We worked closely with U.S. Attorneys' Offices (USAOs) in each of the 94 judicial districts throughout the United States and its territories to provide regular civil rights enforcement training, enrichment programs, and technical assistance for USAOs starting or expanding their affirmative civil rights enforcement programs. These partnerships have been instrumental in achieving significant civil rights wins, including combating redlining, protecting servicemembers, enforcing ADA compliance, and conducting community outreach through programs like United Against Hate.

We also collaborated with U.S.

Attorneys' Offices nationwide
to bolster their proactive civil
rights enforcement efforts.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the extraordinary Civil Rights Division career staff and to the U.S. Attorneys whose teams have partnered with the Division on many of our pivotal matters. Additionally, I thank all those individuals, families, and communities who have bravely filed complaints and testified about violations of civil rights laws. Their voices and commitment to justice are critical to the Division's work enforcing the law and protecting the constitutional rights of all. –Kristen Clarke





