



State of New York
Unified Court System



MEMORANDUM

April 4, 2023

TO: Judges and Non-Judicial Personnel of the Unified Court System

FROM: Anthony Cannataro 
Tamiko Amaker 

SUBJECT: Zero Tolerance for Bias and Discrimination in the Court System

Since the receipt of former U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson's independent review of court system policies, practices, rules and programs as they relate to issues of racial and other bias in October 2020, the Unified Court System has undertaken unprecedented steps to advance diversity and inclusion within the Court System, ensure equal justice under the law and foster a safe, welcoming and bias-free environment. We are pleased to report that Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Edwina Richardson-Mendelson, who has been overseeing our day-to-day efforts to implement and expand upon Secretary Johnson's recommendations, has just released her comprehensive 2022 Year in Review detailing the continuing progress we have made in implementing the report's recommendations.

One very important recommendation in the Johnson Report addressed strengthening court system responses to bias complaints against court personnel. As the Johnson Report and Judge Richardson-Mendelson underscored, the perception that bias conduct will be tolerated within our ranks is pernicious and long-lasting, and seriously impacts the Court System's ability to conduct its public mission in a manner that truly honors the dignity of all who serve it and appear before it. As such, an essential element of our mission to eradicate bias in our courts is to reaffirm and clarify the Unified Court System's Zero Tolerance Policy for bias, harassment or discriminatory behavior. We outline the procedure for addressing these types of complaints against non-judicial employees below. This procedure is effective immediately.

Judges and nonjudicial personnel authorized to impose administrative and/or disciplinary action against employees are directed to carefully weigh these perceptions and their impact on the Court System as a whole in determining the appropriate course of action to be taken where a claim of bias, harassment, or discriminatory conduct against an employee has been substantiated through an investigation by the Office of the Inspector General. The appropriate course of action shall be in accordance with the provisions of the collective bargaining agreements or Rules of the Chief

Judge, as may be applicable; in furtherance of the Court System's Zero Tolerance Policy against bias, harassment and discrimination; and cognizant of the ongoing and disproportionately negative impact those behaviors have on the Court System's mission.

We are also reaffirming our commitment to the attached UCS Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy applicable to all judges and non-judicial personnel, prohibiting conduct that demeans or disparages others on the basis of race, sex, gender identity and a host of other personal attributes. We ask that you take the time to review it again and recommit the principles contained therein.

We thank you for your ongoing support and assistance in fulfilling our Court System's most important and fundamental responsibility: the assurance of equal justice under law.