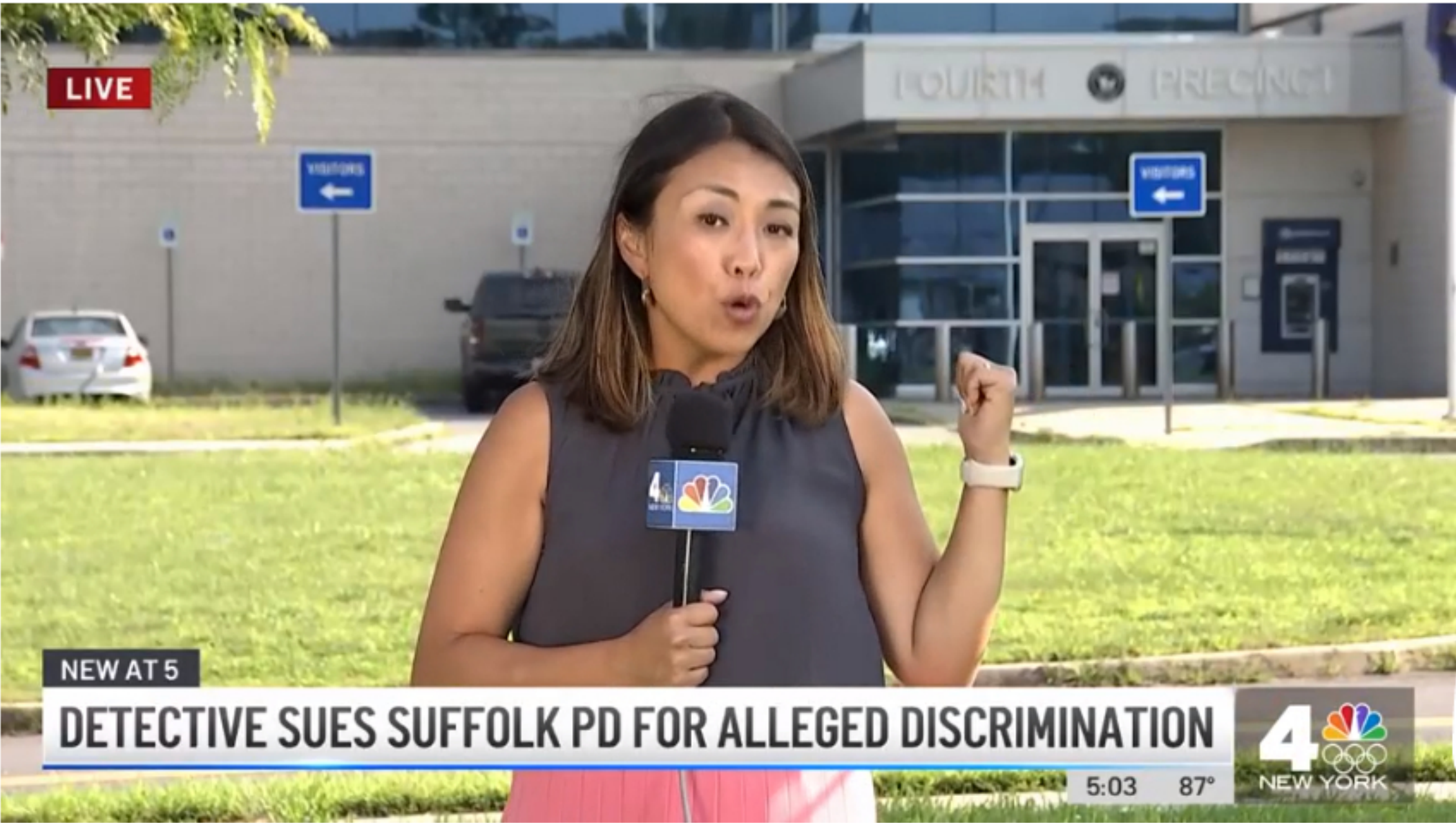


Cop Sues Suffolk County Police Department for Race Discrimination

Det. Sgt. Tulio Serrata, who is Latino, says he was passed over for promotions that ended up being given to lesser qualified white officers.

By **Pei-Sze Cheng** • Published July 15, 2021 • Updated on July 16, 2021 at 3:40 am



A Suffolk County police detective is suing his own department over claims the department passed over him for a promotion because of his race. NBC New York's Pei-Sze Cheng reports.

What to Know

- 1 A 23-year veteran of the Suffolk County Police Department is suing the agency for race discrimination, saying he was passed over for promotions that ended up being given to lesser qualified white officers.
- 2 Det. Sgt. Tulio Serrata says he spoke up about being passed over for promotions and because he voiced his concerns the department subsequently transferred him to a precinct where there is less crime and less overtime.
- 3 Serrata is a 23-year department veteran who has worked on gang and murder cases. He was even recognized by the department in 2019. Serrata, who is Latino, says he's been passed over five different times for promotions that are highly lucrative. The positions were given to lesser qualified white officers, according to Brewington.

A 23-year veteran of the Suffolk County Police Department is suing the agency for race discrimination, saying he was passed over for promotions that ended up being given to lesser qualified white officers.

Det. Sgt. Tulio Serrata says he spoke up about being passed over for promotions and because he voiced his concerns, the department subsequently transferred him to a precinct where there is less crime and less overtime.

"The Suffolk County police department must stop its wrongful and discriminatory ways," Serrata said. "If I remain silent nothing will change."

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Serrata spoke alongside his attorney after filing a federal lawsuit— suing Suffolk County, the Suffolk County Police Department, and several people.

"This is about treating people the way they should be treated no matter who they are or what they look like," Serrata's attorney, Fred Brewington, said.

"I was one of the applicants who applied for the position I was the only one who was not afforded the opportunity to interview for that position and I was passed over by someone who only had been a sergeant for four months," Serrata said.

In the lawsuit, Serrata accuses the department of discrimination, denying him promotions and then retaliating against him when he spoke up about it.

For its part, the Suffolk County Police Department says it doesn't comment on pending litigation and that back in May, they promoted 25 officers to sergeant. Of those promoted 20 of them were white men. The other five consisted of women and minorities.