

# Nassau police commissioner apologizes for comments on force diversity that critics say were stereotypical

News 12 Staff

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The Newsday article states that only 67 of 6,539 Black applicants to the force were hired in the six years following the 2012 police exam.

Ryder was quoted in part saying, "These kids struggle because they don't have both parents around. They don't have a family history of law enforcement and they're at a disadvantage starting off."

Ryder then explained, saying, "I recognize the failings in the process of getting more diverse. I also talk about the programs we've put into place already, like our mentoring program to increase diversity."

Ryder has since apologized. "My comments were not meant to paint anyone with a broad brush and if I offended anybody, I apologize. That was not my intent," he said.

Attorney Fred Brewington says, "It's too little too late."

Brewington was among several civil rights leaders who called for the commissioner to be fired after his initial remarks.

"I really believe that he needs to step down," says Brewington. "As a matter of fact, I'm demanding that on behalf of so many people that have gone through this process and have been harmed by that mentality that he expresses that he must resign."

Nassau County Executive Laura Curran says she doesn't think that is fair.

"Part of the reason I picked him to be police commissioner is he has a commitment to community policing and a commitment to diversity in hiring," says Curran.

According to Newsday, Tracey Edwards, the NAACP Long Island Regional Director, said if that's how the county executive feels then she is unfit to serve as well.