

# Sergeant sues Suffolk County Police Department for \$35M, alleges discrimination

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RIVERHEAD, N.Y. (WCBS 880) — A Suffolk County Police sergeant has filed a lawsuit against the department alleging he has been passed over for promotions multiple times because of his ethnicity.

Over the last year, Tulio Serrata, who has been a member of the Suffolk County Police Department for 23 years, says he has tried multiple time to be promoted, but says that each time, the position has gone to a less qualified White man.

Now, Serrata is suing the department for \$35 million, alleging higher ups discriminated against him because he is Dominican.

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"It has to stop, and I say that time should be now," the police sergeant said at a press conference. "The Suffolk County Police Department cannot continue to discriminate."

Serrata is being represented by civil rights attorney Fred Brewington, who was one of the many activists calling for the resignation of Nassau County Police Commissioner Patrick Ryder last month.

Those calls came after Ryder, in an interview with Newsday, said the reason why many Black candidates do not show up for the police exam is because they "come from broken homes."

Serrata, who is also president of the Suffolk County Police Hispanic Society, says discrimination across the Long Island police departments needs to end. He is hopeful his lawsuit will create change.

"If I don't speak out, [the way that] I and other officers of color are treated in the department will simply be swept under the rug," he said.

The police department does not comment on pending litigation.

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