



NEW YORK CITY LAW DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL

Michael A. Cardozo, Corporation Counsel

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

**NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES
SETTLEMENT WITH LATINO OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**

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New York, Jan. 31, 2004 – To further the equal employment initiatives and policies formulated by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly, the City has agreed to settle a 1999 class-action lawsuit brought by the Latino Officers Association against the New York City Police Department (NYPD). The settlement is subject to final approval of the court. A related case brought by the Guardians Association was also settled.

The settlement incorporates various previously implemented initiatives that have not only improved the operations of the NYPD but ensured that discrimination will not be tolerated. The NYPD is proud of its diverse workforce and does not engage in discrimination on any basis, including race or national origin. The settlement agreement's incorporation of these management initiatives is one more positive step in the Police Department's continuing efforts to eliminate discrimination in the workplace.

The settlement also provides for a process under which Latino and African-American police officers may present claims to a Special Master, Ken Feinberg, if they feel that they have previously been harmed by alleged discrimination. Although the City has pledged up to \$20 million as a measure of its good faith and commitment, it is anticipated that after all claims are heard, this amount will be well in excess of the amounts that will have to be paid to satisfy the claims. All monies remaining after the claims process has been completed will be returned to the City.

"This settlement furthers the City's progressive goal of resolving claims fairly and expeditiously through mediation or with a Special Master, rather than engaging in the unnecessary expense and delay of protracted jury trials," noted Corporation Counsel Michael A. Cardozo, whose office, the New York City Law Department, negotiated the settlement. The legal team included Georgia Pestana, Chief of the Labor & Employment Law Division, as well as Labor & Employment Senior Counsels James Lemonedes, William Fraenkel and Drake Colley.

The New York City Law Department is one of the oldest, largest and most dynamic law offices in the world, ranking among the top three largest law offices in New York City and the top three largest public law offices in the country. Tracing its roots back to the 1600's, the Department's 650-plus lawyers handle more than 90,000 cases and transactions each year in 17 separate legal divisions. The Corporation Counsel heads the Law Department and acts as legal counsel for the Mayor, elected officials, the City and all its agencies. The Department's attorneys represent the City on a vast array of civil litigation, legislative and legal issues and in the criminal prosecution of juveniles. Its web site can be accessed through the City government home page at www.nyc.gov or via direct link at www.nyc.gov/html/law/home.html.

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