

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence Statement Regarding the Sexual Harassment Investigation of Governor Cuomo

It is the mission of the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence to create and support the social change necessary to prevent and confront all forms of domestic violence. At the core of our work is a foundational principle to do all that we can to support victims and survivors of abuse and violence while we also strive for system reforms that address gaps in prevention and response across our state.

We believe it is time for Governor Cuomo to step down, and more broadly, that the NY State Legislature take the responsibility to enact the proper systemic response to hold him accountable for his actions.

We commend Attorney General Letitia James for undertaking a steadfast process guided by integrity to uncover truths and being open and transparent with the People of the State of New York. The investigation concluded on August 3rd when the Attorney General released the “Report of Investigation Into Allegations of Sexual Harassment By Governor Andrew M. Cuomo”.

The Conclusion of the report is as follows:

“Upon completion of our independent investigation into allegations of sexual harassment brought against Governor Andrew Cuomo and the surrounding circumstances, we have reached the conclusion that the Governor sexually harassed a number of State employees through unwelcome and unwanted touching, as well as by making numerous offensive and sexually suggestive comments. We find that such conduct was part of a pattern of behavior that extended to his interactions with others outside of State government.

We also find the Executive Chamber’s response to allegations of sexual harassment violated its internal policies and that the Executive Chamber’s response to one complainant’s allegations constituted unlawful retaliation. In addition, we conclude that the culture of fear and intimidation, the normalization of inappropriate comments and interactions, and the poor enforcement of the policies and safeguards, contributed to the sexual harassment, retaliation, and an overall hostile work environment in the Executive Chamber.” (State of New York, Office of the Attorney General, 2021, Report of Investigation Into Allegations of Sexual Harassment By Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, p. 165)

The experiences of those that have come forward to report abuse and harassment are disconcerting. And we are deeply troubled by the silencing and minimizing tactics that have been utilized in response to those who were harassed and abused.

New York State is at a turning point, and we cannot dismiss the deep impact these actions, inactions, and deflections have on those in public service, others who interact with state government, survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and all New Yorkers.

We know that good things in our state can occur when we refuse to repeat the past, set higher goals, and ensure accountability and responsibility within our systems. In fact, this must be our path forward.

ABOUT THE NEW YORK STATE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

Established in 1978, NYSCADV is nonprofit organization that is designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as the information clearinghouse, primary point of contact, and resource center on domestic violence for the State of New York. NYSCADV is responsible for supporting the development of policies, protocol, and procedures to enhance domestic violence intervention and prevention and also provides education and technical assistance to the network of primary-purpose domestic violence service providers statewide.