



*“We must root out the corruption and misconduct that undermine faith in our public institutions. Our country and our state face significant challenges, and we won’t be able to meet them if people do not trust that those in authority are working single-mindedly for the public good. We must create a culture of accountability where powerful individuals and institutions know that they must act with integrity or else face the consequences.”*

*– Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal.*



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# OFFICE OF PUBLIC INTEGRITY & ACCOUNTABILITY



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## Office of Public Integrity & Accountability

New Jersey's unified, integrated system of law enforcement is unique in the nation. The Criminal Justice Act of 1970 established a comprehensive law enforcement system for our State. Under this law, the Attorney General is New Jersey's chief law enforcement officer, and the Division of Criminal Justice has the authority of the Attorney General to enforce the law and prosecute crimes throughout the 21 counties that make up the State of New Jersey.

In 2018, Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal announced the creation of a new unit within the Department of Law & Public Safety/Division of Criminal Justice known as The Office of Public Integrity & Accountability (OPIA).

***Our Goal** is to strengthen public confidence in government institutions.*

***Our Mission** is twofold - to investigate violations of public trust and to develop policies that would rebuild faith in both government and our criminal justice system.*



## Units & Bureaus within OPIA

**1. The Corruption Bureau** serves as OPIA's lead office for the investigation and prosecution of state criminal violations involving corruption and abuses of public trust. OPIA's Corruption Bureau has investigated some of the Division's highest profile cases including:

- December 21, 2019: OPIA charged five individuals with bribery and other related crimes. These individuals allegedly solicited and/or accepted thousands of dollars in illegal campaign contributions from an undercover cooperator in return for a promise of providing public work. These defendants include local councilmembers, a Jersey City School Board President and two candidates for public office.
- December 20, 2019: A South Jersey councilman was charged with stealing more than \$8,000 from the state-funded Clean Communities Program, which provides funds for local groups and organizations to clean parks and other public areas.
- December 16, 2019: A Mayor in Middlesex County was indicted on charges of theft and official misconduct for allegedly stealing approximately \$190,000 from various local political campaigns and using a local charity to launder the money.
- November 20, 2019: A former South Jersey police officer pleaded guilty to felony charges related to two separate incidents in which he used excessive force against women during arrests.

**2. The Integrity Bureau** supervises certain matters that relate to maintaining the integrity of the criminal justice system in New Jersey. The Bureau oversees:

- a. Conviction Review Unit.** The Unit reviews claims of actual innocence, investigates those deemed meritorious, and presents its findings to the Attorney General for decision and appropriate action.
- b. Cold Case Network.** The Cold Case Network coordinates a statewide network of regional cold case task forces to provide resources and expertise to assist law enforcement officers solve old crimes using new technologies.
- c. Investigations of Officer-Involved Shootings, Use-of-Force Incidents, and In-Custody Deaths.** OPIA supervises the independent investigations of criminal cases involving police use-of-force or in-custody deaths, and advises on certain actions including the selection of the Independent Investigator and the review for conflicts of interest.

**3. Special Investigations Bureau** conducts certain investigations regarding violation of state criminal law and Departmental Administrative rules including criminal civil rights prosecutions and internal affairs investigations.

**4. Office of Policing Policy (OPP)** oversees the development of statewide and Department-wide policies designed to strengthen confidence in the criminal justice system. OPP is organized to address data collection & analysis, policy development and training for law enforcement personnel.