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# Office for Civil Rights Discrimination Complaint Form: Submission #736417

## 1. Enter information about yourself

First Name:

Last Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Best Time to Call You: Day

Primary Phone Number:

Alternative Phone Number: {Empty}

Your Email Address:

## 2. Who else can we call if we cannot reach you?

Contact's Name: {Empty}

Daytime Phone Number: {Empty}

Relationship to you: {Empty}

## 3. Who was discriminated against?

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Yourself or Someone else Myself?

If someone other than yourself please include:

Injured Person's Name: {Empty}

Daytime Phone Number: {Empty}

Evening Phone Number: {Empty}

Relationship to You  
(eg. son or daughter) {Empty}

Injured Person's Address: {Empty}

City: {Empty}

State: {Empty}

Zip Code: {Empty}

#### **4. What institution discriminated?**

Institution Name: SUNY Rockland Community College

Address: 145 College Rd

City: Suffern

State: New York

Zip Code: 10901

School or department involved: (b)(6);  
(b)(7)(A);@sunyrockland.edu (b)(6); (b)(7)(A);  
(b)(7)(C)@sunyrockla

#### **5. Have you tried to resolve the complaint through the institution's grievance process, due process hearing, or with another agency?**

Have you tried to resolve the complaint? No

## 6. Describe the discrimination

OCR enforces regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin; sex; disability; and/or age.

(You may select more than one.)

On what basis were you discriminated against? national origin, retaliation because you filed a complaint or asserted your rights

In the space provided below please describe each discriminatory action separately. For each action, you need to provide the following information: On [redacted], i met with @sunyrockland's [redacted]

[redacted] following my [redacted] [redacted] expressed bias against me throughout this entire meeting. he [redacted]

[redacted], when i told him violence is against my religion. he spoke to me in a hostile tone, he kept shaking his head and making grimaces (when i told him that i was a [redacted] he full-on recoiled) and everything i said to defend myself, he had something to say against it. i asked [redacted] during the meeting how i specifically allegedly violated the student code of conduct, and he refused to answer me. instead, he asked me why i thought it was appropriate to [redacted]

[redacted] he told me he is surprised that i "won't acknowledge [my] behavior" because of my high intelligence, bringing up my [redacted] gpa. i told him it is because of my intelligence that i refuse to be held accountable for @sunyrockland's false allegations and unjust sanctions against me. i will say it again: from the river to the sea, palestine will be free! [redacted]

Do you have written information that you think will help us understand your complaint?

yes or no Yes

## 7. Your complaint must be filed within 180 days of the discriminatory action

The laws that we enforce require that complaints be filed with our office within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory event. If any of the alleged discriminatory actions took place more than 180 days before the postmark or receipt date of this complaint, you may request a waiver of the 180-day limit. When did

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the last act of discrimination occur?

## When did the last act of discrimination occur?

Enter the date: Thu,  - 00:00

Are you requesting a waiver of the 180-day filing time limit for discrimination that occurred more than 180 days before the filing of this complaint?

## Are you requesting a waiver of the 180-day filing time limit for discrimination that occurred more than 180 days before the filing of this complaint?

yes or no No

Reason for not filing complaint before 180 days: {Empty}

## 8. What would you like the institution to do as a result of your complaint?

What remedy are you seeking? Financial compensation,

## 9. Option to Participate in OCR's Early Mediation Process

I am interested in participating in early mediation: No



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

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NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10278

REGION 2

NEW JERSEY  
NEW YORK  
PUERTO RICO  
U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

March 4, 2024

Sent via email only to: president@sunyrockland.edu

Lester Edgardo Sandres Rápalo, Ed.D.  
President  
State University of New York  
Rockland Community College  
145 College Road  
Suffern, New York 10901

Re: Case No. 02-24-2088 – State University of New York, Rockland Community College

Dear Dr. Rápalo:

On November 17, 2023, the U.S. Department of Education (the Department), Office for Civil Rights (OCR) received a complaint filed against the State University of New York, Rockland Community College (the College). The Complainant alleged that the College retaliated against her for, among other things, her (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) by (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) (Allegation 1). The Complainant also alleged that the College discriminated against her on the basis of her national origin (shared Jewish ancestry) when a College staff member demonstrated bias and hostility toward her during (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C) (Allegation 2).

OCR enforces Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-2000d-7, and its implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 100, which prohibit discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin (including shared ancestry) in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance from the Department. The regulation implementing Title VI, at 34 C.F.R. § 100.7(e), provides that no recipient or other person shall intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by regulations enforced by OCR or because one has made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing held in connection with a complaint. As a recipient of federal financial assistance from the Department, the College is subject to Title VI and its implementing regulations.

OCR will investigate the following issues: whether the College subjected the Complainant to retaliation and/or discrimination, including harassment, based on her national origin (shared Jewish ancestry) in violation of Title VI and its implementing regulations.

*The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.*

Please understand that opening an investigation does not mean that OCR has made a decision with regard to the merits. During the investigation, OCR is neutral, collecting and analyzing relevant evidence from the complainant, the recipient, and other sources, as appropriate. OCR will ensure that its investigation is legally sufficient as required by OCR's Case Processing Manual (CPM) (July 18, 2022). You may find additional information in OCR's Complaint Processing Procedures. Individuals who file complaints with OCR may have the right to file a private suit in federal court whether or not OCR finds a violation.

OCR may close this case prior to making formal findings of compliance or non-compliance, provided that the circumstances or information gathered establishes an administrative or other basis for resolution in accordance with the CPM. For example, under Section 201(b) of OCR's CPM, if both parties are interested and OCR determines that the individual allegations are appropriate for mediation, the parties may voluntarily resolve these complaint allegations through mediation that OCR will facilitate. Note that in such a case, OCR does not monitor or enforce the agreement reached between the parties. Please inform OCR if you are interested in resolving this complaint through mediation.

When appropriate, a complaint may be resolved before the conclusion of an investigation after the recipient expresses an interest to OCR to resolve the complaint. In such cases, OCR obtains a resolution agreement signed by the recipient. This agreement must be aligned with the complaint allegations or the information obtained during the investigation, and it must be consistent with applicable regulations.

To reach an efficient resolution of this case, OCR is providing an opportunity for the College to present its response to the complaint's allegations and to submit supporting documentation. **Within 20 days of the date of this letter**, please provide to OCR the information listed in the attached data request. The regulation implementing Title VI, at 34 C.F.R. §§ 100.6(b) and (c), requires that a recipient of federal financial assistance make available to OCR information that may be necessary for it to determine whether a recipient is in compliance with the regulations it enforces. Pursuant to 34 C.F.R. § 100.6(c) and 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(3)(iii), of the regulation implementing the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, OCR may review personally identifiable records without regard to considerations of privacy or confidentiality. OCR will take all proper precautions to protect the identity of any individuals named in the documents.

Please be advised that the College must not harass, coerce, intimidate, discriminate, or otherwise retaliate against an individual because that individual asserts a right or privilege under a law enforced by OCR or files a complaint, testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding under a law enforced by OCR. If this happens, the individual may file a retaliation complaint against the College with OCR.

Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), it may be necessary to release this document and related correspondence and records upon request. If OCR receives such a request, it will seek to protect, to the extent provided by law, personally identifiable information that, if released, could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Case Number 02-24-2088

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If you have any questions, please contact Charles Skriner, Compliance Team Attorney, at (646) 428-3890 or [charles.skriner@ed.gov](mailto:charles.skriner@ed.gov); or Stacy Bobbitt, Compliance Team Investigator, at (646) 428-3823 or [stacy.bobbitt@ed.gov](mailto:stacy.bobbitt@ed.gov); or me, at (646) 428-3796 or [jocelyn.panicali@ed.gov](mailto:jocelyn.panicali@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(C)

(b)(6); Jocelyn Panicali

Compliance Team Leader

Attachment

