

# **Problems at Planned Parenthood**

**Information for Protecting Our Health**



# United States

Planned Parenthood itself offers detailed information on its own racist history:

	The History & Impact of Planned Parenthood
---	--

Further examples from recent years:

	Employees Are Calling Out Major Reproductive Rights Organizations for Racism and Hypocrisy by Ema O'Connor, <i>Buzzfeed</i> , August 21, 2020
	Dozens of Black Employees Said They Faced Racism at Planned Parenthood, An Internal Audit Found by Ema O'Connor, <i>Buzzfeed</i> , October 9, 2020
	Ex-Planned Parenthood Employee Says Racist, Toxic Culture Sent Her to the ER by Emily Shugerman and Brianna Sacks, <i>The Daily Beast</i> , October 19, 2022

## Excerpt:

(NEW YORK) — A former Planned Parenthood employee is suing the organization, alleging the reproductive healthcare nonprofit retaliated against her and ultimately fired her for speaking out against its treatment of Black women.

Plaintiff Nicole Moore, the former director for multicultural engagement at Planned Parenthood based at the national headquarters in Manhattan, New York, claims in the complaint filed on Wednesday that Planned Parenthood has perpetuated a culture of racism where Black women within the organization are discriminated against through unequal work distribution and opportunities for promotions.

“[Planned Parenthood] has blatantly ignored reports by dozens of its Black employees of systemic unequal hiring and promotion, more work for lower pay, overt hostility, and trafficking in stereotypes by leadership,” according to a copy of the complaint obtained by ABC News.

Moore, who says she served in the role from Jan. 13, 2020, through Nov. 2, 2021, also claims that “Black-centered campaigns were deprioritized and under-resourced.”



A South Jersey nurse practitioner is suing Planned Parenthood alleging race discrimination. Her case is one of many against the reproductive health giant.

by Sarah Gantz, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 18, 2023

**Excerpt:**

Over the last five years, discrimination lawsuits have been filed by at least two dozen former and current employees of Planned Parenthood’s 49 affiliates, which employ thousands across the country and are a leading source of reproductive health care in almost every state, according to an *Inquirer* analysis of publicly available national case databases.

In court records and interviews, employees said they faced racist comments from coworkers and were held to a different standard than white colleagues. Many said supervisors were more critical of their work, while valuing their contributions less, compared with white coworkers . . .

For every former employee who has sued, many more likely have experienced discrimination but stayed quiet for fear that it will affect their ability to find new employment, lawyers representing workers told *The Inquirer*. The number and geographic spread of the cases suggest a systemic problem, according to a University of Pennsylvania expert in diversity in health-care workplaces.

## Moore

The 2022 Complaint can be found at:

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/united-states](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/united-states)

### Excerpt:

When [Plaintiff] politely spoke up about the inequitable distribution of work, she was falsely accused of being negative, angry, difficult to work with, and chastised for her "tone" - complaints that had no basis in reality but comported with well-trafficked stereotypes about Black women. Planned Parenthood executives then proceeded to thwart Moore's ideas, sabotage her projects, and subject her to unfounded disciplinary measures that were clearly intended to silence her complaints. The barrage of mistreatment caused Moore to suffer a panic attack so severe that she spent a day in the hospital. After complaining to HR that the disciplinary measures appeared to be retaliation for her complaints of racial inequality at the organization, she was summarily fired.

## Joyner

	<p>Joyner v. Planned Parenthood Federation, 2007 NY Slip Op 31798(U) (N.Y. Sup. Ct. 6/8/2007)</p> <p>Court Decision on Discovery, June 8, 2007</p>
--	--

### Excerpt:

Plaintiff was the Vice President for Diversity of defendant Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc. ("defendant" or "PPFA") from August 2004 until she was terminated, purportedly for cause, in or about February 2006. Her complaint alleges that she was terminated in retaliation for her efforts to document and to remedy pay disparities between white employees and others, and for her repeated complaints to defendant about a pattern and practice of discrimination on the basis of race and national origin.

← Post



**Amber J. Phillips**  
@AmberAbundance



I'm so glad this people shared their stories. I worked at @PPact on the @PPGenAction team and it was the most racist and toxic work environment I have ever experienced in my life.

[buzzfeednews.com/article/emaoco...](https://buzzfeednews.com/article/emaoco...)

7:09 PM · Aug 25, 2020

## California



A South Jersey nurse practitioner is suing Planned Parenthood alleging race discrimination. Her case is one of many against the reproductive health giant.

by Sarah Gantz, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 18, 2023

### Excerpt:

The cases detail how inappropriate behavior, racist tropes, microaggressions, and unequal expectations went unchecked, even after employees complained. A few examples . . . A Black nurse practitioner in California said she was called a “homie” by a supervisor who also made comments about her hair and used racial slurs when referring to other Black people. The Planned Parenthood affiliate settled the case privately in 2019.

## Los Angeles

### **Bryant**

*The 2017 Complaint can be found at:*

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/california-los-angeles](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/california-los-angeles)

#### **Excerpt:**

1. Plaintiff . . . was employed by defendant Planned Parenthood Los Angeles . . . she began her employment on or about July 11, 2016. Plaintiff's race is African - American. Her title was Family Nurse Practitioner.

2. During her employment, defendant PPLA's managerial and supervisory Employees . . . harassed and discriminated against plaintiff and other co -employees because of their African - American race.

3. This harassment and discrimination occurred on a daily basis and included, but was not limited to, the following:

- a) Calling African -Americans "homies;"
- b) Criticizing the performance of African -American employees;
- c) Making comments about the hair and braids of African -American employees; and
- d) Making derogatory racial slurs about African -Americans.

4. Non-African-American employees were not treated in such a manner . . .

9. On or about August 2, 2017, plaintiff was terminated. Plaintiff was terminated because she was a witness in support of another employee's complaints of discrimination and harassment and because she complained of harassment and discrimination.

### **Jones**

*The 2004 Complaint can be found at:*

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/california-los-angeles](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/california-los-angeles)

#### **Excerpt:**

8 . . . Plaintiff was the first African American male employee to ever be hired in his particular department by PPLA, and was the first such minority to hold his specific position . . .

12. Among other things, as alleged below, Plaintiff refused to engage in PPLA promotional practices that were intended to deceive the African American community in South Los Angeles . . . Plaintiff, an African American, was not comfortable being forced to misrepresent facts to other similarly situated persons.

13. During this same time period, PPLA was also engaged in other activities having a deleterious effect on African American persons, including Plaintiff's fellow employee, one Nick Nkwuda, an African immigrant. Specifically, in or around January of 2004, Mr. Nkwuda was referred to as a "nigger." PPLA's management did nothing to punish the management employee who used such degrading language toward an employee similarly situated to Plaintiff in terms of minority status . . .

14. In fact, throughout 2003 and most of 2004, PPLA had created and allowed the continuation of an environment that was hostile toward African American and other minority employees, especially male employees. A female accounting supervisor referred to male employees in position of authority and officers of the company as "dickheads," and other derogatory terms, constantly defaming and engaging in confrontational behavior which was known throughout and brought to the attention of Human Resources and the interim and permanent CEO and President of PPLA. These terms were most often uttered by the female executive management of PPLA.

15. At the time of Plaintiff's employment, PPLA's white, female management staff also caused openly discriminatory comments and representations to be made that would have made a reasonable person feel uncomfortable . . .

16. The various circumstances described above created an environment that was racist and sexist in tone, policy and practice. These practices have not been abated by PPLA and continue to cause harm to individuals employed by PPLA. PPLA is the subject of multiple verified complaints having been filed with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing within the last six months.

## **Nwuda**

*The 2006 Complaint can be found at:*

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/california-los-angeles](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/california-los-angeles)

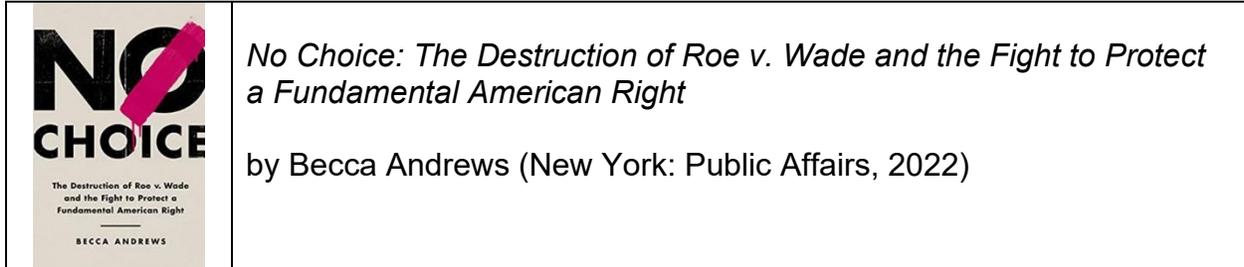
*PPLA = Planned Parenthood Los Angeles*

12. Around January 2004, PPLA hired one [person] . . . Upon her hiring by PPLA, [she] immediately began to get into verbal altercations with plaintiff and others. She constantly used profanity and created a very hostile work environment. This culminated in an incident where she used the word "nigger" directed at plaintiff. Plaintiff immediately placed his concerns in writing and requested disciplinary action with the human resources department at PPLA. Nothing ever happened to correct this wrong. In fact, plaintiff was later put on probation by a female supervisor and then was forced to quit on March 6, 2004 due to a hostile environment.

13. On or about January 2004, plaintiff complained about the derogatory racial terms and slurs and profanity used by [a different staff member], Operations Account. All the accounting staff was in close quarters and these terms were heard by everyone. On February 5, 2004, plaintiff complained in an electronic mail . . . He informed here of the insults and verbal confrontations . . . Nothing was done to prevent further racial harassment and an increasing hostility in the work place environment by management.

# Indiana

## Indianapolis



### **Book Excerpt:**

Nowhere was the survival mode mentality more evident than in the unchecked behavior of the [doctor] at the clinic, a graying white man in his 50s . . .

She suspected that he was harder on patients who did not speak English, and she fought for privileges as the only Spanish speaker on staff to accompany Latinx patients into the procedure room so she could answer their questions and advocate for them if necessary.

# Michigan

## Grand Rapids

*The 2015 Complaint can be found under Grand Rapids at:*

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/michigan](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/michigan)

### **Excerpt:**

In conclusion, I don't feel that Planned Parenthood is providing me with a safe work and non-hostile environment because of my race, ethnicity, and not taking the complaint seriously . . . I love my job here at Planned Parenthood, but if this workplace harassment continues and I don't feel safe at work, then I will be forced to take further action.

# Missouri

## St. Louis



Former St. Louis Planned Parenthood employee sues for racial discrimination

by Deion Broxton, First Alert Channel 4, June. 6, 2024

# New Jersey

## Bryn Mawr



A South Jersey nurse practitioner is suing Planned Parenthood alleging race discrimination. Her case is one of many against the reproductive health giant.

by Sarah Gantz, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 18, 2023

### Excerpt:

A patient’s urine test landed on Michelle Fisher’s desk with a warm, wet splash. Fisher, a Black nurse practitioner, remembers looking up from her lunch to see the white manager of Planned Parenthood’s Bellmawr clinic in Camden County.

The clinic manager often berated Fisher for asking questions the nurse practitioner thought were necessary to do her job — including this time, when she’d asked to see a urine test before authorizing birth control, she says in a federal discrimination lawsuit. Fisher claims that the supervisor frequently ended their terse exchanges by flicking a fist at her, making a whip-cracking sound and ordering, “Now get back to work.”

Such interactions were emotionally draining, Fisher said in an interview, but she continued to show up, day after day, for almost three years because she wanted to provide for Black women and girls what she’d rarely had: a medical provider who looked like her.

When she was laid off in spring 2021 in what she believes was retaliation for filing multiple discrimination complaints to human resources, Fisher decided to do more.

In May 2022, Fisher sued Planned Parenthood of Northern, Central and Southern New Jersey for race discrimination and wrongful termination and was deposed in March of this year. The case is ongoing.

“What if this is someone else’s dream job and they look like me?” she said in an interview. “I want other people to be able to go in there and not be treated like that.” . . .

“If we can’t count on Planned Parenthood to respect Black employees, how can we count on them to care for people of color as patients?” said Valerie Shore, Fisher’s Cherry Hill-based lawyer.

## New York

### General Open Letter: Save PPGNY

	Current and former staffers of Planned Parenthood of Greater New York June 18, 2020
---	--

#### Excerpt:

#### Racism and Weaponizing of the Work of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Against Staff

Planned Parenthood was founded by a racist, white woman. That is a part of history that cannot be changed . . . After years of complaints from staff about issues of systemic racism, pay inequity, and lack of upward mobility for Black staff, highly-paid consultants were brought in three separate times to assess the situation. Each time, employees of color were brutally honest about their experiences, but nothing changed . . .

When diversity and equity are weaponized to make changes that are harmful to staff it diminishes the value of these very important areas of change. We know that Planned Parenthood has a history and a present steeped in white supremacy and we, the staff, are motivated to do the difficult work needed to improve.

#### Decimation of Institutional Knowledge Due to Unprecedented Rates of Staff Turnover

McQuade’s time at PPGNY has been defined by constant staff departures. Under her leadership, 23 members of senior staff have quit or been forced out. Many of these colleagues had 10-20+ years of experience with our affiliate. Others were people hired by McQuade directly to newly created positions who left mere months into their roles. This high amount of turnover has had a destabilizing effect on the organization. The loss of institutional knowledge is so profound as to be detrimental to every aspect of the organization.



## Supplemental Open Letter: On Equity

**June 18, 2020**

We write this — as a group of both current and former BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) employees of Planned Parenthood of Greater New York — to expand on the issues of racism and anti-Blackness in our workplace mentioned in our general open letter to the PPGNY Board . . .

PPGNY, under the leadership of CEO Laura McQuade, has effectively gaslit and silenced their marginalized staff thus creating a toxic work environment. While we stand together as people of color, we also stand firm in our commitment to acknowledge that anti-Blackness is a critical and specific fulcrum of white supremacy.

The PPGNY Senior Leadership team, despite the visual appearance of diversity, has repeatedly weaponized the language of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Rather than using their true definitions, senior leaders and upper management have used these terms to manipulate and silence those with differing opinions and perspectives. They have leveraged identity politics by putting Black and other people of color in positions of leadership who actively participate in harming Black staff and other staff members of color below them.

At this point, PPGNY's attempts to present itself as a diverse workplace have been carefully orchestrated and superficial at best. PPGNY repeatedly tokenizes their Chief Equity and Learning Officer, a Woman of Color who is not of African descent, as the "voice" for BIPOC staff. The decision to hire a non-Black person in this role exemplifies the ways in which white-led organizations use non-Black people as a buffer to actually confront and uproot anti-Blackness within organizations . . .

The class tensions are made clearer when the BIPOC leadership were also complicit in the decisions to furlough/terminate 28% of staff. This included the closing of health centers in the Bronx and Queens, as those areas were being devastated by COVID-19. Additionally furloughed staff, many of which are BIPOC women, remain unclear when they will be called back to work and left with no official information regarding when their health insurance will be terminated.

With multiple attempts by the BIPOC staff to bring these concerns to our supervisors, we continue to be invalidated and marginalized. White and non-Black employees are still given more pay and more advancement opportunities than their Black colleagues. Blanket statements are used to overshadow our grievances, while only exacerbating the problem. Black staff are further disheartened when our white and non-Black colleagues use their privilege to amplify our concerns, and find they, too, are challenged and manipulated into silence.

## Mitchell

*The 2023 Complaint can be found at*

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/new-york-city](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/new-york-city)

### Excerpt:

. . . the reality is that Planned Parenthood continues to be run by people who are openly hostile to racial minorities, the disabled, older workers and those who complain about discriminatory practices.

Proof of this reality lies in the lawsuit filed by . . . Moore\*, who on October 19, 2022 . . . alleged that Planned Parenthood continued to discriminate against African American employees . . .

Now , [defendant], the Chief Operational Officer and highest ranking African American male in Planned Parenthood of Greater New York's history, is filing this lawsuit alleging that he too has been victimized by race, gender, age and disability in violation of Federal State, and New York City laws. This lawsuit is meant to shine a light on the discriminatory and retaliatory employment practices that permeate the organization and bring justice to Mr. Mitchell for the unrelenting discriminatory practices he had and continues to endure.

\* Moore's case is listed above in this chapter under United States.

## Duckett-Holmes

*The 2024 Complaint can be found at*

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/new-york-city](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/new-york-city)

### Excerpt:

21. On or about September 27, 2021, PPGNY hired Plaintiff as Regional Director of Operations . . . based at the Manhattan location . . .

26. Throughout Plaintiff's employment, she was subjected to a continuing pattern and practice of discrimination and hostile work environment based upon her race, color, and gender and in retaliation for complaining about PPGNY's discriminatory actions and other wrongdoing, and for being absent from work due to valid protected leave under the FMLA . . .

28. By way of example, PPGNY required Plaintiff to endure brutal and unsafe working conditions due to her race, color, and gender. Specifically, Plaintiff was forced by her supervisor, . . . to work every single day of the months of October and November 2022 without a day off as a charge nurse.

29. PPGNY's requirements in this regard were clearly discriminatory on these bases, because PPGNY did not require similarly situated white, Caucasian, or male employees to work slave-like hours doing work that was effectively a demotion

30. In or around the end of October 2022, Plaintiff engaged in protected conduct by complaining . . .

32. In fact, in response to Claimant's complaint, PPGNY began a targeted campaign against Claimant in retaliation for this protected conduct, including subjecting her to an increased and disproportionately burdensome workload.

33. Plaintiff suffered a stress-induced medical event as a result of this retaliatory misconduct that necessitated her taking FMLA leave from work on or about March 27, 2023, to about May 22, 2023, when she returned to work.

34. Following her return, and in violation of the FMLA, Plaintiff was placed in a substantively different role than the one she had prior to her job-protected medical leave, a role that would require significantly more stress and responsibility than the role she worked prior to her leave of absence . . .

36. The new responsibilities being hazardous to her health, on June 6, 2023, Plaintiff was constructively terminated effective July 7, 2023 . . .

43. While Plaintiff's employment with PPGNY was a harrowing, traumatic experience, the events complained of herein do not reflect a unique incident, as rudimentary internet research paints a similarly distressing picture of discriminatory abuse and misconduct<sup>5</sup> by PPGNY<sup>6</sup> and those occupying the most powerful positions within PPGNY . . .

48. As a result of PPGNY's unlawful and discriminatory actions, Plaintiff has endured unlawful humiliation resulting in extreme emotional distress, severe depression, extreme anxiety, and physical ailments.

### **Screenshot:**

Complaint filed November 12, 2014

#### Department of Health and Human Services – Office for Civil Rights Health Information Privacy Complaint

On three separate visits this year, I've been made to feel unwanted in by Planned Parenthood of NY 26 Bleeker Street practice. It seems a negative change in attitudes with the predominantly Black front end staff occurs once my insurance info is looked up. There has been repeated incidences dehumanizing behaviors while having morning appointments bumped to late afternoons/evening. Staff will put more effort into pressuring me to leave the office than to process my paperwork. Opting to stay in the waiting area, I've witnessed Caucasian patients be accommodated immediately with similar circumstances as me. Directors, Supervisors, Doctors and Nurses do NOT respond to complaints on obvious unequal treatment of patients. I have been a patient of this location from 2010-2014. There has not been a problem until this year. Attached are detailed incidences experienced this year with the November 8th appointment change email.

# Pennsylvania

## Open Letter: Save PPPA

	On November 24, 2020, employees of Planned Parenthood released an open letter alleging racism and poor management of severe budget cuts. It was signed by the entire staff. The letter demanded the resignation of Executive Director. She resigned on December 1, 2020.
---	--

	Planned Parenthood's Pennsylvania Chapter Director Resigns After Racism Claims by Emily Shugerman, <i>The Daily Beast</i> , December 2, 2020.
---	--

### Huffmeyer

*The full Race Discrimination Complaint can be found at*

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/texas-houston-stafford](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.org/texas-houston-stafford)

#### Excerpt:

18. At the end of August 2017, PPGC assigned a new supervisor to oversee Ms. Huffmeyer's performance . . . Following that appointment, Ms. Huffmeyer's workplace quickly turned into a living nightmare. Not only did [the new supervisor] persistently belittle Ms. Huffmeyer; she also resorted to treating her so badly that her work environment quickly became sufficiently hostile to start causing her health to deteriorate, all because of Ms. Huffmeyer's race and national origin. Among other health issues, Ms. Huffmeyer developed daily headaches and fever blisters . . .

22. Not only did [the supervisor] abuse Ms. Huffmeyer without cause as to her work; she also made inappropriate comments about her national origin. [She] once asked Ms. Huffmeyer how "close" she was to Ms. . . . Nguyen (the Director of the PPGC Center for Choice), just because both Ms. Huffmeyer and Ms. Nguyen were Vietnamese. Essentially, [she] assumed that two unrelated people would immediately form a clique in their workplace, just because they both happen to be of Vietnamese origin. Ms. Huffmeyer told Ms. [her] that she did not know Ms. Nguyen well at all. Ms. Farrell responded by stating that she did not trust Ms. Nguyen and that Ms. Huffmeyer should not trust her either. When Ms. Huffmeyer tried to reassure [her] that her only goal was to make sure she looked good, [she] dismissed her, saying, "I'm not sure about that! Birds of a feather . . .

29. Instead of seeing her working conditions improve, Ms. Huffmeyer was unceremoniously terminated, just over three months after the complaint was filed, without any respect for the ten years of impeccable service she delivered to the Company.

## Tennessee



A South Jersey nurse practitioner is suing Planned Parenthood alleging race discrimination. Her case is one of many against the reproductive health giant.

by Sarah Gantz, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 18, 2023

### **Excerpt:**

The cases detail how inappropriate behavior, racist tropes, microaggressions, and unequal expectations went unchecked, even after employees complained. A few examples . . . A Latina community organizer in Tennessee who complained about racism in the workplace said she was written off as “mean” and “hostile.” A supervisor scolded her for having a “snarky look” during a meeting to discuss her concerns, according to a 2023 complaint in an ongoing case.

## Texas



A South Jersey nurse practitioner is suing Planned Parenthood alleging race discrimination.

by Sarah Gantz, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 18, 2023

### **Excerpt:**

The cases detail how inappropriate behavior, racist tropes, microaggressions, and unequal expectations went unchecked, even after employees complained. A few examples . . . A lab manager in Texas was repeatedly berated by her supervisor, whose criticism often centered on her Vietnamese heritage. “It’s so annoying that you can’t speak English,” the manager once screamed at her, she said in a complaint filed in 2019. The Planned Parenthood affiliate settled the case with undisclosed terms.

# QR Codes to Website Pages

[www.problemsatplannedparenthood.com](http://www.problemsatplannedparenthood.com)

Home Page



United States Page



Explanations & Lists



**A compilation of patient and employee reviews mentioning racism:**

