

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

## ATTORNEY GENERAL GREWAL ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP AT THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

*From the Office of the Attorney General:*

*New Focus on Filling the Void Left By Federal Pullback of Consumer Protection Regulation*

**Trenton** – New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal today announced that Governor Murphy will nominate Paul R. Rodriguez to serve as the Director of the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, the lead state agency charged with protecting consumers' rights, regulating the securities industry, and overseeing 47 professional boards. Rodriguez's selection highlights the Administration's efforts to fill the void left by the Trump Administration's pullback of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), fulfilling one of Governor Murphy's promises to create a "state-level CFPB" in New Jersey.

Rodriguez, a New Jersey native, is currently serving as Acting Counsel to New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio where he provides advice and strategic guidance to the mayor and top administrative officials on legal, management, and policy objectives. As a member Mayor de Blasio's senior management team, Rodriguez was dedicated to ensuring a fairer and more just city for all.

As the federal government abandons its responsibility to protect consumers from financial fraudsters, it is more important than ever that New Jersey picks up the mantle to protect its own residents," said Attorney General Grewal. "Paul has the energy and ability necessary to lead the Division as we work to protect New Jerseyans from fraud and professional misconduct in the marketplace."

During his time in city government, Rodriguez managed numerous aspects of Mayor de Blasio's human rights, equity, and "good government" reform agendas; including transparency, worker equity, and expansions to the Human Rights Law.

Before joining the de Blasio administration, Rodriguez was an associate at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP in New York City where he worked in a variety of areas, including financing transactions, securities regulation, and intellectual property. His pro bono work for the firm included assisting with the negotiation a multi-million dollar framework agreement on behalf of indigenous tribes in Peru, an important step in ongoing efforts to remediate impacts of four decades of oil extraction in the region. Rodriguez also served as the Simpson Thacher & Bartlett extern to Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A, representing nonprofits dedicated to serving low-income communities. He previously served as a projects specialist and senior staff member for U.S. Senator Frank R. Lautenberg, specializing in transportation, infrastructure, organized labor, and homeland security. Rodriguez grew up in Union City where much of his family still lives. He received his law degree from Yale Law School and graduated summa cum laude from Montclair State University with a B.A. in Political Science.

The Division of Consumer Affairs is responsible for enforcing laws designed to ensure the fairness and integrity in New Jersey's commercial and investment marketplaces, and for assisting consumers with complaints or questions about particular professionals, businesses, vendors, or service providers. The Division includes the Office of Consumer Protection, which enforces the Consumer Fraud Act, one of the nation's strongest consumer protection statutes, and the Bureau of Securities, which regulates the securities industry in New Jersey. The Division oversees numerous state professional licensing boards, including those licensing doctors, nurses, and pharmacies, and houses the state's Prescription Monitoring Program, which maintains records on prescriptions filled in New Jersey for controlled dangerous substances and is a key tool in the state's fight against opioid addiction. In total, the Division is composed of approximately 530 employees, of which nearly 150 are investigators.

Rodriguez will begin serving as Acting Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs on June 1. Governor Murphy will formally nominate Rodriguez to the position, which is subject to the advice and consent of the State Senate.

In the interim, Kevin Jespersen will serve as Acting Director of the Division, a position currently held by Sharon M. Joyce, who is transitioning to lead the Office of Attorney General's newly created Office of the New Jersey Coordinator of Addiction Responses and Enforcement Strategies ("NJ CARES.")

Jespersen currently serves as Chief Counsel to the Attorney General, a position he has held since early February. Jespersen joined the Office of the Attorney General in 2016, serving as Chief Counsel and later Executive Assistant Attorney General. He will serve as Consumer Affairs' Acting Director from April 6 to June 1.

Joyce, a 38-year-veteran of New Jersey government, has served as Consumer Affairs' Acting Director since September 2017. In February she took on dual leadership roles when Attorney General Grewal selected her to head the newly created NJ CARES. Under Joyce's leadership, NJ CARES is responsible for overseeing addiction-fighting efforts across the Department of Law and Public Safety and creating partnerships with other agencies and groups similarly committed to identifying and implementing solutions to the opioid crisis and drug addiction.

*"Kevin is a consummate professional and a trusted member of my leadership team. His willingness to step in as Acting Director ensures that the Division of Consumer Affairs will be in capable hands during this time of transition," said Attorney General Grewal. "I am grateful for all Sharon has accomplished during her tenure in Newark, both as Deputy Director of the Division of Law and as Acting Director of the Division. Now that she is free to dedicate herself fully to her role as Director of NJ CARES, I look forward to Sharon's continued successes as she leads New Jersey's fight to end the deadly scourge of addiction."*

[Back to Top](#)

Powered by [Google Translate \(https://translate.google.com\)](https://translate.google.com)

[Translator Disclaimer \(/governor/disclaimer.shtml\)](/governor/disclaimer.shtml)

## Governor Phil Murphy

[Home \(/governor/\)](/governor/)

### Administration

[Governor Phil Murphy \(/governor/admin/about/\)](/governor/admin/about/)

[Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver \(/governor/admin/lt/\)](/governor/admin/lt/)

[First Lady Tammy Snyder Murphy \(/governor/admin/fl/\)](/governor/admin/fl/)

[Cabinet \(/governor/admin/cabinet/\)](/governor/admin/cabinet/)

[Boards, Commissions & Authorities \(/governor/admin/bca/\)](/governor/admin/bca/)

[Internship Opportunities \(/governor/admin/internship.shtml\)](/governor/admin/internship.shtml)

[Governor's Residence - Drumthwacket \(http://drumthwacket.org/\)](http://drumthwacket.org/)

### Key Initiatives

[Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economy\)](/governor/initiatives/#Economy)

[Education \(/governor/initiatives/#Education\)](/governor/initiatives/#Education)

[Environment \(/governor/initiatives/#Environment\)](/governor/initiatives/#Environment)

**[Health \(/governor/initiatives/#Health\)](/governor/initiatives/#Health)**

**[Law & Justice \(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](/governor/initiatives/#Justice)**

**[Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](/governor/initiatives/#Transportation)**

## **News & Events**

**[Press Releases \(/governor/news/news/562018/approved/news\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/news/562018/approved/news_archive.shtml)**

**[Public Addresses \(/governor/news/addresses/\)](/governor/news/addresses/)**

**[Executive Orders \(http://nj.gov/infobank/eo/\)](http://nj.gov/infobank/eo/)**

**[Transition Reports \(/governor/news/reports/approved/reports\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)**

**[Press Kits \(/governor/news/press/\)](/governor/news/press/)**

## **Social**

**[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/\)](https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/)**

**[Twitter \(https://twitter.com/GovMurphy\)](https://twitter.com/GovMurphy)**

**[Instagram \(https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/\)](https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/)**

**[Snapchat \(https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy\)](https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)**

**[Contact Us \(/governor/contact/\)](/governor/contact/)**

## **Statewide**

**[NJ Home \(http://www.nj.gov\)](http://www.nj.gov)**

**[Services A to Z \(http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html)**

**[Departments/Agencies \(http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/)**

**[FAQs \(http://www.nj.gov/faqs/\)](http://www.nj.gov/faqs/)**

**[Contact Us \(http://www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html)**

**[Privacy Notice \(http://www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html)**

**[Legal Statement & Disclaimers \(http://www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html)**

**[Accessibility Statement \(http://www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html)**

**[\(http://nj.gov/opra/\)](http://nj.gov/opra/)**

**[\(http://nj.gov/transparency/\)](http://nj.gov/transparency/)**

