

[Home](#)
[Newsroom](#)
[Media](#)
[Administration](#)
[NJ's Priorities](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Press Releases](#)
[Public Addresses](#)
[Executive Orders](#)
[Press Kit](#)
[Reports](#)
[Home](#) > [Newsroom](#) > [Press Releases](#) > 2013

Fighting To Keep New Jersey Safe

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Fighting To Keep New Jersey Safe

During His Tenure As Attorney General, Jeff Chiesa Has Been A Strong Advocate For The People Of New Jersey

A Focus On Keeping New Jerseyans Safe:

Cracking Down On Gangs And Organized Crime: During 2012, the Attorney General's office opened 120 new "gangs and organized crime" cases, filing charges against 285 alleged gang members, drug dealers and other dangerous offenders. Chiesa's office cracked down on violent drug rings operating in a number of urban centers, including Camden, Perth Amboy, Paterson.

The Largest Gun Buyback Program In State History: Chiesa's office implemented a continuing series of gun buybacks that have made New Jersey communities safer by collecting more than 10,000 dangerous firearms – including approximately 5,000 handguns and approximately 1,200 illegal weapons – out of circulation to date.

Making Atlantic City Safer: The Attorney General's Office has worked closely with the Atlantic City Tourism District Commander, the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office, the Atlantic City Police Department, the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, and other partners in the state's "Clean & Safe" initiative in Atlantic City.

Last month, the Task Force charged 28 people in connection with heroin and cocaine dealing, as well as a number of violent assaults and homicides, linked to the 800 Blok street gang operating in Atlantic City.

Through Clean and Safe, additional law enforcement resources have been deployed on the Boardwalk and around the casinos on a regular basis, making the city safer for tourists and residents alike.

Protecting New Jersey's Most Vulnerable Citizens:

Stepping Up The Fight Against Human Trafficking: Attorney General Chiesa made New Jersey more effective in attacking the problem of human trafficking.

He issued a statewide Law Enforcement Directive designed to increase human trafficking investigations and prosecutions, identify and rescue human trafficking victims, provide comprehensive services to victims, and train police to recognize possible signs of human trafficking activity when investigating other crimes.

His office also formed a new Human Trafficking Unit within the Division of Criminal Justice, with additional staff assigned. The unit will increase the State's ability to perform proactive, long-term sex and labor trafficking investigations in conjunction with law enforcement partners at the local, county and federal levels.

Protecting Children: Chiesa launched a multi-pronged attack on child exploitation crimes. The Attorney General's office conducted statewide stings that resulted in the arrest and indictment of many child pornography offenders.

One sting resulted in the arrest of 26 defendants, including a man who had been living above a day care center.

At the same time, he worked closely with the Legislature on proposed reforms aimed at toughening penalties for child pornography possession and file-sharing offenses, and eliminating loopholes and "soft

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spots" in our criminal statute that can allow serious offenders to avoid serious punishment.

Defending Civil Rights: Attorney General Chiesa took action against those who violated New Jersey's anti-discrimination law in housing, the workplace, places of public accommodation, and elsewhere. In 2012, the Attorney General's Division on Civil Rights obtained more than \$2 million in settlement payouts on behalf of alleged discrimination victims. The Division also continued to sponsor a series of public forums throughout the state for veterans and active military personnel regarding their employment and other rights.

Combating Prescription Drug Distribution Abuses: The Attorney General's office launched the New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program in 2012. The Prescription Monitoring Program involves a searchable database designed to "flag" the suspicious dispensing of prescription drugs classified as Controlled Dangerous Substances and Human Growth Hormone.

Since its inception, nearly 9,000 individuals and entities have registered with the Monitoring Program, including approximately 7,000 medical professionals.

The program has been used repeatedly by the State -- and by various law enforcement agencies -- to identify suspected cases of drug diversion, and has resulted in numerous arrests and prosecutions.

Sticking Up For New Jersey Taxpayers And Consumers:

Cracking Down On Public Corruption: The Attorney General's office filed 40 new public corruption cases in 2012, charging current and former public officials at every level with crimes related to the exploitation of their positions for personal gain.

Obtaining A Major Illegal Political Contributions Indictment: Chiesa's office obtained an indictment in March 2013 against Birdsell Services Group, a large Monmouth-County-based engineering firm, as well as seven executives and shareholders in the company, on charges that they conspired to avoid the restrictions of New Jersey's Pay-to-Play Act by disguising illegal corporate political contributions as personal contributions of employees of the firm.

The first-degree charges carry a sentence of 10 to 20 years in state prison, and the money laundering counts also carry fines and penalties of up to \$1 million.

Vigorously Prosecuting Insurance Fraud: The Attorney General's office opened 463 new insurance fraud prosecutions in 2012. Among these were many successful prosecutions, including a case in which two chiropractors were sentenced to seven-year prison terms for referring approximately 100 of their patients, fraudulently, for other services, and for failing to report a combined income of more than \$1 million.

Targeting Allegedly Deceptive Bars and Restaurants: Conducted "Operation Swill," a raid last month by more than 100 Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control and Division of Criminal Justice investigators that resulted in the citing of 29 restaurants and bars in New Jersey for allegedly deceiving customers by charging them for premium alcoholic beverage brands while serving them non-premium brands.

Leading A Highly-Effective Civil State Litigation Effort: Obtained more than \$200 million in civil recoveries and judgments on behalf of the State in 2012 -- a significant increase over each of the previous two years -- while reducing the State's own litigation-related payouts substantially during the same period.

Laying The Groundwork For The Future:

A State Police Force That Reflects New Jersey's Diversity: Chiesa has personally led a continuing effort to recruit and train a diverse State Police organization -- one that reflects the diverse New Jersey population it serves. Through this effort, the State Police Academy at Sea Girt recently began training the most diverse State Police class in history -- the 152nd State Police class.

[Star-Ledger: "New N.J. State Police Class Most Racially Diverse In State History, Attorney General Says"](#)

Recovery From Hurricane Sandy: Along with Governor Christie, Chiesa helped lead the State's Superstorm Sandy response involving handling logistics, rescuing victims from floodwaters, and protecting residents from price-gougers and scam artists bent on turning a catastrophe into an opportunity to turn a profit.

New Jersey has brought charges against 27 businesses for price gouging in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

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