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# New York Attorney General Letitia James announces run for governor

By [Amy B Wang](#), [Tyler Pager](#) and [Josh Dawsey](#)

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New York Attorney General Letitia James (Brendan McDermid/Reuters)

  
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New York Attorney General Letitia James (D) has announced she is running for governor, making her the highest-profile candidate to challenge Gov. Kathy Hochul in what is likely to be a fiercely contested Democratic primary.

"I'm running for Governor of New York because I have the experience, vision, and courage to take on the powerful on behalf of all New Yorkers," James [tweeted](#) Friday afternoon. "Let's do this, together."

James, 63, oversaw the inquiry into the sexual harassment claims against then-Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo (D) that led to his resignation in August. In a launch video she posted to social media Friday, James alluded to the Cuomo investigation but did not mention the former governor by name.

"I've held accountable those who mistreat and harass women in the workplace, no matter how powerful the offenders," James said.

I'm running for Governor of New York because I have the experience, vision, and courage to take on the powerful on behalf of all New Yorkers.

Let's do this, together. [pic.twitter.com/JA21M19p5m](https://pic.twitter.com/JA21M19p5m)  
— Tish James (@TishJames) October 29, 2021

James was elected attorney general in 2018, the first Black woman to hold that office in New York. Before she won statewide office, James served as New York City public advocate and as a member of the city council representing parts of Brooklyn.

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During her tenure as attorney general, James has also sued the National Rifle Association and led investigations into former president Donald Trump, both of which she highlighted in her launch video.

“I’ve sued the Trump administration 76 times — but who’s counting?” she said.

“I’ve fought for affordable housing and worked to eliminate the NRA.”

A host of other Democrats are also considering jumping into the governor’s race, including New York Mayor Bill de Blasio; Jumaane Williams, the city’s public advocate; and U.S. Rep. Thomas Suozzi, whose district is centered on Long Island. Hochul, New York’s first female governor, immediately announced she would run for a full term after assuming office. If elected, James would be the country’s first Black woman governor.

Republican gubernatorial candidates so far include Rep. Lee Zeldin (N.Y.) and Andrew Giuliani, the son of former New York mayor and Trump lawyer Rudolph W. Giuliani.

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In August, James released a 165-page report that detailed the numerous allegations of sexual harassment against Cuomo and found he created a hostile work environment for women in violation of state and federal law. The probe found that Cuomo harassed 11 women, including a state trooper on the governor's security detail.

[\*\['What he did to me was a crime': Cuomo executive assistant who filed criminal complaint breaks silence\]\*](#)

Cuomo has attacked James and the investigation as politically motivated and riddled with errors and distortions, and the news of her run is likely to bring more sharp criticism from Cuomo and his advisers. On Thursday, Cuomo was [charged with a misdemeanor sex offense](#) in a criminal complaint filed in Albany City Court. On Friday, Cuomo attorney Rita Glavin called the timing of the charge — on the eve of James announcing her run — “highly suspect.” “Tish James abused her office to falsely accuse Governor Cuomo because she was afraid to confront him in an election and let the people decide,” Cuomo spokesman Rich Azzopardi said in a statement Friday. “[Albany County Sheriff Craig] Apple is only regurgitating her sham report, and has no corroborating evidence whatsoever of a crime.”

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At a news conference Friday Apple defended the integrity of his office's investigation into the allegation against Cuomo, saying it was handled "like a normal investigation." The criminal complaint was filed in Albany City Court. "I don't even know what that means," Apple told reporters, when asked about critics who have accused him of playing politics. "How is the Albany County Sheriff doing a political hit job? That's ridiculous."

*Felicia Sonmez contributed to this report.*

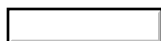
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