



**INVESTIGATIVE REPORT**  
Case Number: 2019-0002-EXE

**“Gender Discrimination”**

**CITY OF ATLANTA**  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICES – OFFICE OF RESILIENCE**

**PREPARED BY:**

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**OFFICE OF LABOR AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**  
City of Atlanta/Department of Human Resources



# CITY OF ATLANTA

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
MARIAN Y. WOODS  
COMMISSIONER

## REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**CASE NUMBER:** 2019-0002-EXE

**PERSON(S) UNDER INVESTIGATION:** Amol Naik

**DEPARTMENT:** Executive Offices

**OFFICE:** Office of Resilience

**ALLEGATION:** Gender Discrimination



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## I. OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENT

The Mayor's Office of Resilience works to make Atlanta better prepared to physical, social, and economic challenges that are a growing part of the 21st century. For the City of Atlanta, working to be more resilient entails preparing Atlanta residents, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems to survive, adapt, and thrive no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. By addressing both the shocks and the stresses, the city becomes more able to respond to adverse events, and is overall better able to deliver basic functions in both good times and bad, to all populations.

Pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation, the Office of Resilience is supported by the 100 Resilient Cities Network. Through this partnership, resources are provided to maximize the city's assets, like strengthening Atlanta's arts and culture sectors to promote economic development, connecting Metro Atlantans to new careers and skill development opportunities, as well as revamping city policies and systems to encourage civic participation from all residents. The Office works with all City departments and leadership to encourage policy development and reform.

## II. ALLEGATION

Several complaints were received concerning the Chief Resilience Officer's treatment of women and their place in the revised structure of the Office of Resilience. Complaints centered around disparate treatment of women and favoritism exhibited toward men; thereby producing an unfavorable environment for women.

## III. BACKGROUND

Based on the nature of the complaint, the Office of Labor and Employee Relations initiated an administrative internal investigation into the matter.

## IV. BASIS OF INVESTIGATION

### a. Employees Interviewed

- 1) Natasha Dyer, Data/Reporting Analyst, Sr.
- 2) Cicely Garrett, Deputy Chief Resilience Officer
- 3) Yeou-Rong Jih, Project Manager I
- 4) Amol Naik, Chief Resilience Officer
- 5) Valerie McKibben, Special Project Coordinator



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### b. Non-employees interviewed

1) N/A

### c. Materials Reviewed

1) N/A

## V. INVESTIGATION: FINDINGS OF FACT

**A. What is the reporting structure of your office?** Amol Naik is the Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Atlanta. The Office of Resilience is comprised of several offices including the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Welcome Atlanta, Human Trafficking, and One Atlanta.

Mr. Naik was employed by the City of Atlanta in July of 2018. Upon his arrival, he was presented with an organizational chart with the reporting structure. To create an atmosphere of inclusion, Mr. Naik used that organizational chart and created a leadership team that is currently comprised of four women and three men. Out of this leadership team five individuals directly report to Mr. Naik.

There has been some concern in regard to the reporting structure; in that every member of the leadership team was already employed by the City of Atlanta and previously had a different reporting structure. This seems to be a point of contention in the office as some individuals see their reporting structure as a “step down” or “less prestigious” than reporting directly to the Mayor or having an office located in the Mayor’s office.

Some employees seem to be bypassing the reporting structure. Mr. Naik has explained to the leadership team the structure of the organizational chart and that everyone cannot be a Deputy; or report directly to himself or the Mayor.

**B. What has been the response to the new reporting structure?** Employees have expressed their concerns privately to Mr. Naik with the primary concern being management style. Those interviewed viewed Mr. Naik style as hands off, but supportive. One employee noted his style was authoritarian and aloof, and not easily accessible. The previous CRO (Stephanie Stuckey) was viewed as politically established, and a sustainability expert who championed sustainability aggressively within the City of Atlanta and moved with urgency. In contrast Mr. Naik did not have a sustainability background and was viewed with skepticism by the environmental



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community who expressed their concerns directly with Mr. Naik upon his arrival. Mr. Naik is viewed as politically cautious and a novice to city government work. There is frequent comparison between Mr. Naik and Ms. Stuckey, who was viewed as energetic and Mr. Naik who is viewed as calm, steady, and consistent, in general; but one employee noted that he is “socially awkward.” Questioned further, this employee defined his social awkwardness as a byproduct of his “talkative” nature which some viewed as salesmanship or “spin.” In addition, Mr. Naik was viewed as having strong political aspirations which impacted his decision making. He mentioned to one employee he does not “advocate” for his employees’ work and implied he simply wants them to perform.

- C. Have there been additional concerns about the changes?** In regard to work load, those interviewed believed Mr. Naik relied on some members of the team, who happened to be female, solely based on competence and reliability.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Based on testimony obtained during the course of this investigation, there is insufficient evidence to substantiate that Mr. Naik discriminated based on gender or created a hostile work environment through the disparate treatment of women

1. The interviews and admission of Mr. Naik substantiated that he was accustomed to and expected a different level of professionalism and accountability coming from the private sector; and in his employment with one of the premier companies in the world (Google). His previous experience had also exposed him to a level of confidentiality and maturity on behalf of direct reports which has not been exhibited as standard practice by his current direct reports.
2. In addition, Mr. Naik’s political aspirations, while being a novice to city government, have created a perception of aloofness and separation from employees that is simply political caution coupled with high performance expectations for his staff. The reorganization of the Office of Resilience also became a point of contention; as some individuals see the new reporting structure as a “step down” or “less prestigious” than reporting directly to the Mayor or having an office located in the Mayor’s office.
3. Finally, those interviewed also provided testimony that Mr. Naik relied heavily on certain individuals because of their knowledge and competence who happened to be female; directly contradicting allegations of discrimination and/or disparate treatment based on gender. Decisions on office space were not found to be based on gender, but availability and need.



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## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The Office of Resilience should participate in Change Management training facilitated by Training and Organizational Development with an emphasis on helping employees identify where they fit in the hierarchy of the organization and how this plays into their role in organizational decision making, adapting to new changes, improving office culture, and achieving better project results.

## VIII. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT REVIEW CERTIFICATION

This claim has been investigated and the Department of Human Resources hereby considers the matter administratively closed.



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### **IX. FINAL ACTION FORM**

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**PLEASE EXPLAIN AND PROVIDE A COPY OF ANY ACTION INITIATED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT TO THE OFFICE OF LABOR AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS. PLEASE FORWARD ALL RESPONSES NO LATER THAN THIRTY (30) DAYS AFTER RECEIPT AND REVIEW OF THIS REPORT.**