

Nassau LONG ISLAND

Mangano ordered to testify in sexual harassment lawsuit

August 15, 2016

By Zachary R. Dowdy zachary.dowdy@newsday.com



Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano speaks on Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2016 in Mineola. He and Nassau Sheriff Michael Sposato have been ordered to testify in a sexual harassment suit. Photo Credit: Howard Schnapp

A federal magistrate has ordered Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano and Nassau Sheriff Michael Sposato to provide testimony in litigation over a deputy sheriff's claim that she has been a victim of sexual harassment in the workplace.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Steven I. Locke, who sits in federal court in Central Islip, on Monday granted a motion by Alicia Boudouris, a six-year veteran of the sheriff's department, to compel the two top county officials to be deposed as part of the lawsuit she filed in November.

Boudouris, who worked in the sheriff's department's Family Court unit in Westbury, claimed that male co-workers made her the target of vulgar, off-color jokes about her body, and that she frequently heard them speak inappropriately about members of the public — especially women — ranging from county workers to celebrities.

Her lawsuit claims the department created a hostile work environment and retaliated against her — by removing her from the unit in April 2013 — when she filed an internal complaint.

Boudouris seeks unspecified damages.

"The depositions of Mangano and Sposato are necessary as Boudouris alleges that both officials were personally involved in the events that gave rise to the litigation," Locke wrote in the two-page decision.

advertisement | advertise on newsday

He added that Boudouris had documented that she had spoken to Mangano himself on "at least nine occasions" about her work environment and that she had sent Sposato a memo about "sexual harassment within the Family Court Unit."

A county source familiar with the history of the case said Mangano had advised Boudouris to file a federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission complaint, which she did, and that she requested a transfer, which was granted. That transfer was challenged, however, by the union on seniority grounds, and she was transferred again elsewhere, the source said.

Locke had also noted that, according to documents provided to the court by Boudouris, Mangano had "directed Sposato to transfer Boudouris out of the unit" after she requested it.

County officials could not be reached for comment.

But Boudouris' attorney, Rick Ostrove of Leeds Brown Law in Carle Place, said Mangano and Sposato share some responsibility for his client's experiences at work.

"The County Executive and the Sheriff have a responsibility to properly address sexual harassment," Ostrove said in a statement. "Either of them could have intervened and corrected the improper conduct. The judge found that the personal involvement of these top-level officials was sufficient to permit us to take their testimony under oath."

www.newsday.com/long-island/nassau/judge-directs-county-exec-to-testify-in-harassment-suit-1.12181046