

*The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, August 9, 2000

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## EEOC AND MONDRIAN HOTEL SETTLE TITLE VII LAWSUIT

LOS ANGELES - The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Mondrian Hotel have settled a lawsuit filed by the EEOC on behalf of a group of former valet/bellmen terminated from the Hotel in late 1996. Pursuant to the settlement, Mondrian will pay \$120,000 to each valet/bellman.

The lawsuit arose when the current owner bought the Mondrian Hotel in 1995 after it had been in bankruptcy for several years. A decision was made to overhaul the Mondrian. During that overhaul, Mondrian discharged the existing valet/bell staff and hired an all new bell staff for the reopening.

Hotel management described the settlement as a "win/win" result. General Manager David Weidlich stated, "We are pleased we were able to reach an accord with the EEOC. We have no desire to invest legal fees, time and effort in fighting when we share the agency's goals. We feel badly that these former employees were lost in the chaos of the reopening and that their discharge may not have been handled as sensitively as it could have been. However, the hotel manager from that time period is gone and we've taken steps to ensure this type of thing cannot happen again. We have appointed a human resources director whose job it will be to help us comply with our obligation to oversee and report on hiring and firing and fair employment programs, including disseminating the appropriate policies and employee training. We are glad to have the litigation behind us and will continue in our longstanding commitment to fair job treatment."

EEOC Chairwoman Ida L. Castro said, "The Commission will continue to protect our nation's workforce from unfair job actions. I am pleased that in addition to compensating these nine workers, this employer is taking steps to create an environment that will insure equality of job opportunities."

Olophius Perry, Acting Director of EEOC's Los Angeles District Office said, "The Mondrian worked cooperatively with the Commission to reach a fair and equitable resolution of this case. All the parties are to be commended, as the Mondrian is implementing policies and procedures that will promote EEO objectives at the Hotel."

The EEOC was joined in the suit by The Law Office of Patrick Mortimer of San Diego. Mr. Mortimer represented eight of the nine workers as plaintiff-intervenors, who also alleged a claim under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, which was settled as well. Mr. Mortimer stated, "The terms of the settlement adequately address my clients' claims."

In addition to enforcing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin, the EEOC enforces the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the Equal Pay Act; Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits employment discrimination against people with disabilities in the private sector and state and local governments; prohibitions against discrimination

affecting individuals with disabilities in the federal government; and sections of the Civil Rights Act of 1991. Further information about the Commission is available on the agency's web site at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov).

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