

*The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*

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CONTACT: Anna Y. Park  
Regional Attorney  
(213) 894-1083

Olophius E. Perry  
District Director  
(213) 894-1112

Dana C. Johnson  
Senior Trial Attorney  
(213) 894-1079

## LAWRY'S RESTAURANTS SUED FOR SEX BIAS IN HIRING

### ***EEOC Says Men Categorically Rejected for Server Jobs, Only Women Hired to Wait Tables***

LOS ANGELES – The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) announced today that it has filed a national class action sex discrimination lawsuit against Lawry's Restaurants, Inc., doing business as Lawry's The Prime Rib, Five Crowns, and the Tam O'Shanter Inn, on behalf of male applicants who were systematically rejected for hire as food servers due to their gender. Lawry's, a California-based corporation, operates restaurants in Las Vegas, Nevada, Chicago, Illinois, Dallas, Texas, Los Angeles, Beverly Hills and Corona del Mar, Calif.

In its lawsuit, the EEOC alleges that Lawry's instituted a policy of hiring only women for server positions in 1938 and failed to update the antiquated policy with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The EEOC's suit, (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Lawry's Restaurants Inc., d/b/a Lawry's The Prime Rib, et al., CV 06-1963 DDP (PLAx)) was filed in U.S. District Court for the Central District of California after the federal agency first attempted to reach a voluntary settlement. The EEOC's suit seeks back pay and compensatory and punitive damages, in addition to remedial relief.

"Lawry's practice of hiring only women as servers, with their period costumes, pre-dates the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964," said EEOC Los Angeles Regional Attorney Anna Y. Park. "Nonetheless, the practice of denying men the opportunity to work in the higher-paying server jobs is blatant sex discrimination. An employer as large and sophisticated as Lawry's should certainly know better and act better."

Olophius Perry, Director of the Los Angeles District Office, said, "With the enactment of Title VII, all employers are obliged to survey their employment practices to ensure that they are in compliance. We encourage employers in the restaurant industry to be proactive in stamping out stereotype biases that restrict employment opportunities based on gender, race, ethnicity or other protected characteristics."

EEOC is the federal agency responsible for enforcing the nation's anti-discrimination laws in the workplace. Further information about the EEOC is available on its web site at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

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