

FILED

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
TAMPA DIVISION

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U.S. DISTRICT COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
TAMPA, FLORIDA

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY)
COMMISSION,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
RIO BRAVO INTERNATIONAL, INC. and)
INNOVATIVE RESTAURANT CONCEPTS,)
INC. and APPLEBEE'S INTERNATIONAL,)
INC. d/b/a RIO BRAVO CANTINA)
)
Defendants.)
_____)

CIVIL ACTION NO.
99-1371-CIV-7-17A
COMPLAINT
JURY TRIAL DEMANDED
INJUNCTIVE RELIEF SOUGHT

NATURE OF THE ACTION

This is an action under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title I of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 to correct unlawful employment practices on the basis of sex and retaliation, and to provide appropriate relief to Sheri Calvo, Veronica Ferek, Melissa Scarborough and similarly situated individuals who were adversely affected by such practices. As stated with greater particularity in paragraph 11, the Commission alleges that Ms. Calvo, Ms. Ferek, Ms. Scarborough and similarly situated individuals were subjected to sexual harassment by Robert Evans, a management official of the Defendant corporations. The Commission further alleges that Defendants subsequently retaliated against Ms. Calvo, Ms. Ferek and Ms. Scarborough for complaining of the unlawful sexual harassment by subjecting them to adverse terms and conditions of employment, discharge and/or constructive discharge.

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JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. Jurisdiction of this Court is invoked pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 451, 1331, 1337, 1343 and 1345. This action is authorized and instituted pursuant to Section 706(f)(1) and (3) of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-5(f)(1) and (3) ("Title VII"), and Section 102 of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, 42 U.S.C. § 1981A.

2. The employment practices alleged to be unlawful were committed within the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division.

PARTIES

3. Plaintiff, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (the "Commission"), is the agency of the United States of America charged with the administration, interpretation and enforcement of Title VII, and is expressly authorized to bring this action by Section 706(f)(1) and (3) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-5(f)(1) and (3).

4. At all relevant times, Rio Bravo International, Inc. has continuously been doing business in the State of Florida and the City of Clearwater, and has continuously had at least 15 employees.

5. At all relevant times, Innovative Restaurant Concepts, Inc. has continuously been doing business in the State of Florida and the City of Clearwater, and has continuously had at least 15 employees

6. At all relevant times, Applebee's International, Inc. has continuously been doing business in the State of Florida and the City of Clearwater, and has continuously had at least 15 employees.

7. At all relevant times Rio Bravo International, Inc. has continuously been an employer engaged in an industry affecting commerce within the meaning of Sections 701(b), (g)

and (h) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §§2000e(b), (g) and (h).

8. At all relevant times Innovative Restaurant Concepts, Inc. has continuously been an employer engaged in an industry affecting commerce within the meaning of Sections 701(b), (g) and (h) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §§2000e(b), (g) and (h).

9. At all relevant times, Applebee's International, Inc. has continuously been an employer engaged in an industry affecting commerce within the meaning of Sections 701(b), (g) and (h) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e(b), (g) and (h).

STATEMENT OF CLAIMS

10. More than thirty days prior to the institution of this lawsuit, Sheri Calvo, Veronica Ferek and Melissa Scarborough each filed a charge with the Commission alleging violations of Title VII by Defendants. All conditions precedent to the institution of this lawsuit have been fulfilled.

11. Since at least February of 1996, Defendant Employer engaged in unlawful employment practices at its Clearwater, Florida location in violation of Section 703(a) and Section 704(a) of Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §2000e-2(a) and §2000e-3(a).

- a. Sheri Calvo was subjected to sexual harassment by Assistant Manager Robert Evans in the form of unwelcome physical and verbal conduct of a sexual nature which was sufficiently severe and pervasive to constitute an intimidating, hostile and offensive work environment. Defendants failed to take prompt corrective action when they knew or should have known of the sexual harassment.
- b. Defendants retaliated against Sheri Calvo for complaining of the unlawful sexual harassment by subjecting her to adverse terms and conditions of

employment, including unfavorable work schedules and job assignments, and subsequently discharging her from her position.

- c. Veronica Ferek was subjected to sexual harassment by Assistant Manager Robert Evans in the form of unwelcome physical and verbal conduct of a sexual nature which was sufficiently severe and pervasive to constitute an intimidating, hostile and offensive work environment. Defendants failed to take prompt corrective action when they knew or should have known of the sexual harassment.
- d. Defendants retaliated against Veronica Ferek for complaining of the unlawful sexual harassment by forcing her to resign her position.
- e. Melissa Scarborough was subjected to sexual harassment by Assistant Manager Robert Evans in the form of unwelcome physical and verbal conduct of a sexual nature which was sufficiently severe and pervasive to constitute an intimidating, hostile and offensive work environment. Defendants failed to take prompt corrective action when they knew or should have known of the sexual harassment.
- f. Defendants retaliated against Melissa Scarborough for complaining of the unlawful sexual harassment by discharging her from her position.
- g. Other similarly situated female employees of the Defendants were subjected to sexual harassment by Assistant Manager Robert Evans in the form of unwelcome physical and verbal conduct of a sexual nature which was sufficiently severe and pervasive to constitute an intimidating, hostile and offensive work environment. Defendants failed to take prompt corrective

action when they knew or should have known of the sexual harassment.

12. The effect of the conduct complained of in paragraph 11 above has been to deprive Sheri Calvo, Veronica Ferek, Melissa Scarborough and other similarly situated females of equal employment opportunities and otherwise adversely affect their status as employees because of their sex and/or in retaliation for their opposition to unlawful employment practices..

13. The unlawful employment practices complained of in paragraph 11 above were intentional.

14. The unlawful employment practices complained of in paragraph 11 above were done with malice or with reckless indifference to the federally protected rights of Sheri Calvo, Veronica Ferek, Melissa Scarborough and other similarly situated individuals.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, the Commission respectfully requests that this Court:

A. Grant a permanent injunction enjoining Defendants, their officers, successors, assigns, and all persons in active concert or participation with them, from engaging in sexual harassment and any other employment practice which discriminates on the basis of sex and/or opposition to an unlawful employment practice.

B. Order Defendants, to institute and carry out policies, practices, and programs which provide equal employment opportunities for females, and which eradicate the effects of its past unlawful employment practices.

C. Order Defendants to make whole Sheri Calvo, Veronica Ferek, Melissa Scarborough and other similarly situated individuals by providing appropriate back pay with prejudgment interest, in amounts to be determined at trial, and other affirmative relief necessary to eradicate the effects of its unlawful employment practices, including but not limited to

reinstatement and rightful place promotion or front pay.

D. Order Defendants to make whole Sheri Calvo, Veronica Ferek, Melissa Scarborough and other similarly situated individuals by providing compensation for past and future pecuniary losses resulting from the unlawful employment practices described in paragraph 11 above, including out of pocket losses in amounts to be determined at trial.

E. Order Defendants to make whole Sheri Calvo, Veronica Ferek, Melissa Scarborough and other similarly situated individuals by providing compensation for past and future nonpecuniary losses resulting from the unlawful practices complained of in paragraph 11 above, including emotional pain, suffering, inconvenience, humiliation, and loss of enjoyment of life, in amounts to be determined at trial.

F. Order Defendants to pay Sheri Calvo, Veronica Ferek, Melissa Scarborough and other similarly situated individuals punitive damages for its malicious and reckless conduct described in paragraph 11 above, in amounts to be determined at trial.

G. Grant such further relief as the Court deems necessary and proper in the public interest.

H. Award the Commission its costs of this action.

JURY TRIAL DEMAND


The Commission requests a jury trial on all questions of fact raised by its complaint.

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