

■ Sexual Harassment

Women at all levels of employment still encounter sexual harassment. Sexual harassment involves abusive and offensive behavior, sexually derogatory language or other unwelcome sexual conduct that rises to the level of a hostile environment in the workplace.

For example, *EEOC v. Technicolor, Inc.* involved harassment consisting of sexually derogatory slurs, lewd graffiti and pictures, obscene language, sexually charged conduct and unwelcome physical touching. The defendant, a video and DVD processing plant, is owned by the leading global supplier of DVDs, CDs and videos.

Video and DVD processing plant to provide \$875,000 in damages to 18 women affected by pervasive sexually derogatory slurs, pornographic materials and unwelcome touching

The Commission alleged that women who worked as video cassette duplicators in the plant were sexually harassed by male coworkers and supervisors. Many women who complained were disciplined, demoted and even fired. At least half of the women who were targeted are Hispanics with limited English proficiency. The company agreed to resolve the suit by paying \$875,000 in damages to 18 women. Additionally, the company agreed to hire a consultant to implement anti-harassment training, complaint procedures and centralized monitoring.

In *EEOC v. Hanson Motors, Inc.*, the Commission alleged that a car dealership subjected three saleswomen to a sexually hostile work environment primarily through the conduct of the general manager and other male supervisors. The conduct included physical assaults and threats of violence. When the women complained, they were forced to quit. The case was resolved when the company agreed to pay the women \$670,000 in damages and to hire a monitor to oversee its compliance with the law prohibiting sexual harassment.

In *EEOC v. American Home Products Corp. d/b/a Fort Dodge Animal Health and Fort Dodge Laboratories, Inc.*, the Commission claimed that the company unlawfully fired two human resources managers whose investigative report confirmed that sexual harassment was occurring at the Fort Dodge facilities. The suit further alleged that the harasser had been promoted to the top executive position at those facilities and continued to sexually harass female employees after his promotion.

EEOC obtained \$487,500 on behalf of six sexually harassed female employees and the two discharged human resource employees. Additionally, the facilities extensively revised their complaint procedures; American Home Products, their parent company, will monitor all sexual harassment complaints and will report each to EEOC.

Sexual harassment continues to pervade the workplace, aimed at women of all races, ethnic backgrounds and job levels and sometimes even aimed at men

In *EEOC v. Danka Office Imaging Co.*, the Commission obtained \$375,000 on behalf of black females who were subjected to a racially and sexually hostile environment and were assigned the least desirable jobs when they complained.

In yet another case, *EEOC v. Lagadinos, Inc. d/b/a Double T Diner*, the Commission uncovered widespread sexual harassment by male staff members directed at female food servers, including abusive sexual language and inappropriate touching. A settlement provided \$300,000 in monetary relief to 12 women affected by these practices.

In *EEOC v. Ray Ramon d/b/a Casa del Sol*, the owner of a nursing care service company subjected a woman employee to offensive and vulgar comments, requested sexual favors, threatened bodily harm and assaulted the employee during a job interview. The case was resolved when the company agreed to pay her \$225,000 in damages.

See also *EEOC v. River Oaks Diagnostic Center* (\$275,000 in damages to five women subjected to a sexually hostile environment and then fired or forced to resign for complaining about the conduct); *EEOC v. Sandman, Inc., d/b/a/ Star Concrete* (female employee