

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

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THE PLAZA HOTEL TO PAY \$525,000 FOR POST-9/11 BACKLASH DISCRIMINATION AGAINST EMPLOYEES

EEOC Alleged Harassment Based on Muslim Religion and South Asian/Middle Eastern National Origin

NEW YORK -- The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") today announced a \$525,000 settlement of its lawsuit against the Plaza Hotel, Fairmont Hotel Management LP and Fairmont Hotel and Resorts, Inc. under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act for discrimination related to the events of September 11, 2001, against a class of 12 Muslim, Arab, and South Asian employees based on their religion and/or national origin.

The EEOC's lawsuit (Civil Action No.03 - CV- 7680), filed in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, alleged that the class of employees was subjected to a hostile work environment and to severe and pervasive harassment. Specifically, the EEOC charged that employees at the Plaza Hotel were called offensive and derogatory names related to the 9/11 terrorist attacks based on their Muslim religion and/or their Arab and South Asian national origins.

Sunu P. Chandy, EEOC New York Senior Trial Attorney, said, "The EEOC takes very seriously allegations of harassment based on religion and/or national origin. The EEOC will continue to vigorously pursue such cases. We are proud of these brave employees who stepped forward to the EEOC to report the harassment. We are likewise pleased that the Fairmont hotel management entities have agreed to implement improved procedures to train their managers and employees at 14 hotels nationwide that should assist in preventing future discrimination."

Spencer H. Lewis, Jr., EEOC's New York District Director, added: "The EEOC is committed to eradicating backlash discrimination following the events of September 11, 2001, against individuals who are or who are perceived to be Muslim, Sikh, Arab, Middle Eastern, or South Asian. Employers should be aware that they have a duty to prohibit harassment based on religion and/or national origin."

The EEOC is the federal government agency responsible for enforcing the nation's anti-discrimination laws in the workplace based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, retaliation, age and disability. Further information about the EEOC is available on its web site at www.eeoc.gov.

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