



**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**

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**Press Release**

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# **EEOC Sues The Cleaning Authority-Fox Valley for Sexual Harassment and Retaliation**

Cleaning Service Provider Sexually Harassed Female Workers and Punished Them for Complaining, Federal Agency Claims

MILWAUKEE – The Cleaning Authority-Fox Valley, a cleaning service provider in eastern Wisconsin, violated federal law when it subjected female employees to a hostile work environment and terminated their employment in retaliation for opposition to sexual harassment, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) charged in a lawsuit filed today.

According to the lawsuit, female employees were subjected to harassment, which included inappropriate touching and sex-based derogatory comments. For some, the conduct was so severe they were forced to quit to avoid the harassment. Employees who opposed the sexual harassment were terminated, including one who was threatened, causing her to retire early.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against employees because of their sex. The EEOC filed suit in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin (*Equal Employment*

*Opportunity Commission v. Nekimi Holdings, LLC d/b/a The Cleaning Authority-Fox Valley*, Civil Action No. 1:23-cv-01293) after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its conciliation process. The EEOC seeks back pay, compensatory and punitive damages as well as injunctive relief.

“Sexual harassment violates the law, and this case shows despite all the public attention the issue has received, female workers remain vulnerable to harassment in the workplace because of their sex,” said Diane Smason, acting district director of the EEOC’s Chicago District. “Discrimination against female workers is a problem the EEOC will continue to vigorously address.”

“An employer cannot fire employees because they oppose sexual harassment or threaten them to deter them from complaining,” said Gregory Gochanour, regional attorney for the EEOC’s Chicago District. “Prosecuting such violations of Title VII is critical to ensuring the law fulfills its purpose.”

The Chicago District Office is responsible for processing charges of discrimination, administrative enforcement and litigation in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa, with area offices in Milwaukee and Minneapolis.

For more information about sexual harassment visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/sexual-harassment> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/sexual-harassment>). For information about retaliation visit <https://www.eeoc.gov/retaliation> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/retaliation>).

The EEOC advances opportunity in the workplace by enforcing federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. More information is available at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov) (<http://www.eeoc.gov>). Stay connected with the latest EEOC news by subscribing to our [email updates](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new) (<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new>).