



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Press Release

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EEOC Sues Silver Bay Seafood Restaurant, Inc., for Sexual Harassment

Restaurant Allowed Head Server to Sexually Harass Female Employee, Federal Agency Charges

GREENVILLE, S.C. – Silver Bay Seafood Restaurant, Inc. violated federal law when it subjected a female employee to a sexually hostile work environment, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) alleged in a lawsuit filed today.

According to the EEOC's lawsuit, in February 2021, a female employee working at its Simpsonville location was subjected to inappropriate sexual comments and unwanted touching by the male head server. The female employee reported the harassment to Silver Bay Seafood Restaurant, Inc.'s owners and to a manager, but they gave no indication they took the complaint seriously or that they would address the situation. The lawsuit further alleges this was not the first time the head server harassed a female employee. The EEOC claims that Silver Bay Restaurant, Inc. knew or should have known of the head server's propensity for sexual harassment and that it failed to take appropriate corrective action to eliminate the sexual harassment from the workplace.

Such alleged conduct violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits harassment based on sex in the workplace. The EEOC filed suit in the U.S. District

Court, District of South Carolina (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Silver Bay Seafood Restaurant, Inc., Civil Action No.: 6:23-cv-03690-TMC-JDA) after first attempting to reach a pre-litigation settlement through its voluntary conciliation process.

The EEOC seeks monetary relief for the employee, including compensatory and punitive damages. The EEOC also seeks injunctive relief against the company to end any ongoing harassment and to prevent such unlawful conduct in the future.

“When an employer becomes aware of sexual harassment in the workplace or of a sexually hostile work environment, it is critical the employer take prompt and effective action to eliminate the conduct,” said Melinda C. Dugas, regional attorney for the EEOC’s Charlotte District.

Betsy Rader, district director for the EEOC’s Charlotte District, said “it is important employers listen and appropriately respond to sexual harassment complaints by all employees, including young people who may be new to the workplace and particularly vulnerable to imbalances of power.”

The EEOC’s Charlotte District is charged with enforcing federal employment anti-harassment laws in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.

More information about sexual harassment is available at <https://www.eeoc.gov/sexual-harassment> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/sexual-harassment>).

The EEOC also educates young workers about their rights in the workplace. More information can be found at <https://www.eeoc.gov/youth> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/youth>).

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>). 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>).