



Sexual Harassment Allegations Can Cost Your Business Millions \$\$ Tomorrow could be too late!

Tavern on the Green to Pay \$2.2 Million to Settle Harassment Claim

Tavern on the Green, the landmark restaurant in Central Park, agreed on Monday to pay \$2.2 million to settle a lawsuit in which Equal Employment Opportunity Commission had accused it of severe sexual and racial discrimination.

The commission said that the restaurant had “engaged in severe and pervasive” sexual and racial harassment of female, black and Hispanic employees.

Under the settlement, the \$2.2 million will be distributed to more than 50 people who the commission said were victims of harassment and retaliation involved in incidents dating from 1999. In addition, the restaurant will establish a telephone hotline that employees can use to report discrimination complaints.

“Unfortunately, the restaurant industry is still rife with harassment, and well-known, high-end restaurants are no exception to this,” Ms. Wong said. “This settlement should send a very clear message to remind all employers and employees alike that the E.E.O.C. is here to vindicate their right to be free from discrimination in the workplace.”

The settlement also calls for Tavern on the Green to distribute a revised policy against discrimination and retaliation and to provide training to all employees on those subjects.

When the E.E.O.C. first filed the case, it asserted that the restaurant — not just one manager — was guilty of sexual harassment because it “knew or should have known of the severe and pervasive harassment, yet failed to exercise reasonable care to prevent and correct promptly the harassing behavior.”

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Failure to have a sexual harassment/hostile workplace training program and grievance procedures can result in costly litigation.