



NYC Woman Fired From Synagogue Because She Had Sex Before Marriage

A woman was fired from a New York City synagogue because her rabbi found out that she pre-marital sex.

By Rachel Witkin

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Alana Shultz had been the program director at [Congregation Shearith Israel](#), the oldest synagogue in the country, since 2004. [According to a lawsuit she filed](#), she told her supervisor, Barbara Reiss, that she was 19 weeks pregnant before leaving for her honeymoon. Shearith Israel [says](#) it was "founded in 1654 by 23 Jews of Spanish and Portuguese descent."

When she got back to work, she says Rabbi Meir Soloveichik wouldn't even look at her.

"When Ms. Shultz entered Rabbi Soloveichik's office, he had his head turned to the side, looking away from her," her lawsuit reads.

Her supervisor then told her that she was fired. She was offered six weeks of pay and benefits if she didn't sue the synagogue, and, adding insult to injury, she would have to train her replacement.

She says that when she hired a lawyer, the synagogue attempted to rehire her. But she decided to not hide what had happened, and sue them instead.

"After working tirelessly at the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue for the last 11 years I am beyond saddened they've forced me to file this lawsuit, which I hope will help other women avoid what they did to me during what should be a time for celebration and joy," she said in a statement.

Her lawyer says that the synagogue has Yom Kippur to think about what they've done.

"Filing this case on the eve of Yom Kippur will hopefully give the defendants some time to reflect on their atrocious conduct toward a pregnant loyal former employee," attorney Doug Wigdor [told](#) the *New York Daily News*.