

Gene Freidman, New York's 'Taxi King,' faces sexual harassment complaint (Video) - New York Business Journal

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It's not good to be the "Taxi King" right now.

Evgeny "Gene" Freidman, touted as the largest medallion operator in the entire country, has "royally misbehaved," according to a new lawsuit that accuses him of sexual harassment and gender discrimination.

The complaint, attained by the New York Business Journal, lists "I know you want me" and "She says 'no' but we know what 'no' means" as just two of the many unsavory statements Freidman is said to have made toward his former assistant, Elaine Gutierrez.

Freidman allegedly subjected Gutierrez to "a constant barrage of unwanted and sexually harassing comments" during her time as his accounts payable manager and chief executive.

When Gutierrez warned Friedman to stop and that everything he said was in writing, she was fired.

Friedman is listed as a defendant along with his chief financial officer, Andreea Parcalaboiu, who fired Gutierrez.

"The justification given for the sudden termination of Ms. Gutierrez was, incredibly, blatantly retaliatory: Her purported failure to 'shut up and do what [she] is told,' " according to the complaint.

Attorneys Tanvir Rahman and Lawrence Pearson from New York law firm Wigdor LLP are providing legal counsel to Gutierrez.

"Ms. Gutierrez's case makes it clear that Gene Freidman thought he was the king of his business and could talk about Ms. Gutierrez's body and make advances on her with impunity," they said in a joint statement. "Just as bad was that she was fired because she declared that the harassment needed to stop."

Gutierrez, in a prepared statement, said she felt "dehumanized and treated like a sexual object" by Freidman.

"When I demanded that he stop it, I was fired, and they told me it was because I didn't shut up and do what I was told," she said. "I hope my case will give a voice to other women who have had to face sexual harassment at work, and look forward to getting my day in court."

This isn't the first time Friedman landed himself in hot water over his treatment of women. According to the New York Post, his ex-wife, Sandra, filed a complaint of attempted assault. She later filed for divorce.