

Fox News Sued For Racial Discrimination, Sexual Harassment By Three More Employees

F forbes.com/sites/brettedkins/2017/05/22/fox-news-sued-for-racial-discrimination-sexual-harassment-by-three-more-employees/

5/21/2017



(Photo by Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

Fox News' legal woes worsened Monday, as three women joined the growing list of current and former employees suing the network for racial and sexual discrimination.

Kathleen Lee, a shift editor at Fox News Radio, and Naima Farrow, a former accounts payable coordinator, filed separate lawsuits Monday against Fox. Vidya Mann, a former accounts receivable specialist, joined an existing lawsuit alleging racial discrimination.

Lee, Farrow, and Mann join 23 current and former Fox employees now suing the network, including Kelly Wright, an African American co-anchor of Fox's Saturday programming. Wright [claims](#) he was "marginalized" and "sidelined" at Fox because of his race.

Lee, who has worked at Fox for over 10 years, [claims](#) that radio anchor Ron Flatter made sexually insensitive remarks to her and other female employees, calling them "sluts and whores." Lee claims that human resources "looked the other way and failed to act" when she reported the behavior.

Farrow says she was fired less than three days after telling her supervisor that she was pregnant. She also claims that Fox permitted a racially hostile work environment and that former comptroller Judith Slater referred to Farrow's office floor as "the ethnic floor."

Mann, a Guyanese woman, claims that Fox refused to hire her as a permanent employee despite working for the network for four years and that Fox fired her shortly after she gave birth. Federal and New York State law prohibit discrimination against pregnant women.

Fox News denies these allegations. "We believe these latest claims are without legal basis," said a spokesperson, "and look forward to proving that Fox News at all times has acted appropriately, and lawfully." The spokesperson added, "[Fox] is committed to a diverse workplace that is free from all forms of discrimination."

Still, the new lawsuits add to the picture of a network in turmoil. Last week, Fox [fired](#) "The Five" co-host Bob Beckel for making a racist comment to a black IT employee. When the employee came to Beckel's office to fix his computer, Beckel apparently stormed out of his office, citing the employee's race.

In the past year alone, sexual harassment complaints have cost Fox News its CEO, a rising star, and its biggest star. Roger Ailes, who passed away last week, resigned in July 2016, amid allegations of sexual harassment. Megyn Kelly left in January [in part because](#) of the network's permissive attitude toward sexual harassment. Bill O'Reilly left in April. Fox also lost co-president Bill Shine [earlier this month](#).

The new lawsuits also complicate Fox's plan to acquire British broadcasting network Sky. Fox's parent company, 21st Century Fox Inc., is vying for approval from British regulator Ofcom to acquire the British broadcaster for \$15 billion. Ofcom has [met with attorneys](#) involved in the sexual and racial discrimination lawsuits.

(In the interest of full disclosure, this reporter previously worked at the law firm currently representing former Fox comptroller Judith Slater.)