

# I was demoted days after telling bosses I was pregnant: suit

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A sales executive at a prominent Manhattan marketing firm was demoted — four days after telling her bosses she was pregnant, according to a new lawsuit.

Ashley Berg, 34, says she was about three months pregnant last month when she told the COO of BMF Media Group — an international firm with clients including Toyota, Uber, Dell and Estée Lauder — that she was going to have a kid.

COO Eric Brunman replied, “We knew this was coming,” her Manhattan suit says.

When Berg — the executive vice president of sales — was hired, managing partner Ed Starr “ominously” told her the company ran a risk assessment for employees who may take maternity leave and that she was “at the top of the list,” according to court papers.

Four days after she told Brunman she was pregnant, Berg was demoted back to a sales position, which came with a 35 percent pay cut, the suit says.

Brunman told her “she had not done anything wrong but that he did not think that she was qualified to run a sales team” and that the “sole contributing sales person position was a ‘better role for you now because you are pregnant,’” the court papers say.

The suit says the company “immediately began a campaign of shutting out and marginalizing Ms. Berg.”

Berg — who still works at BMF — says she is owed more than \$60,000 in commissions. She is also suing for unspecified damages.

“We are deeply troubled that a company, whose clients seek to empower women, would marginalize a highly regarded pregnant employee because of the discriminatory belief that she cannot be both a mother and have a successful career,” said Berg’s lawyer, Douglas Wigdor.

Brunman said, “Ms. Berg has in no way been damaged, and her allegations are without any basis in fact.”

“We vehemently deny any allegation that BMF’s business decisions at issue were in any way illegal or discriminatory, and intend to defend this matter and let the facts show the truth.”