

# Five NY1 anchorwomen sue for age and gender discrimination

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By Stephen Rex

Brown

Five prominent anchorwomen on NY1 sued the local news station Wednesday, charging they were marginalized by management to make room for younger, less qualified female colleagues.

The Manhattan Federal Court suit was filed by some of the most familiar faces on the 24-hour local news network: Roma Torre, Kristen Shaughnessy, Jeanine Ramirez, Vivian Lee and Amanda Farinacci.

"New Yorkers deserve to have the most talented journalists deliver the news. Sadly, after dedicating over 100 years of award-winning journalism to NY1, our five clients have clearly been told that their careers are over, as NY1 seems to believe that younger faces, when it comes to women, are a 'better look' for the bottom line," the anchorwomen's attorney Doug Wigdor said in a statement.

"We will hold NY1 accountable for their blatant ageist and sexist views and intend to send a message across all media that this epidemic of discrimination toward older women must come to an end. We are confident that New Yorkers will rally behind our clients knowing that merit and ability are how people ought to be judged. "

Torre, NY1's first on-air hire in 1992, says that she's been marginalized since Charter took over the station in 2017 despite her winning an Emmy as recently as this year.

"Unfortunately, Ms. Torre's career has started to unravel," the suit says. "A revamped weekly news schedule has thrust all of NY1's resources and marketing efforts towards younger women and men."

The suit reveals tension over the network's treatment of popular morning anchor Pat Kiernan. Torre says that her on-air time as a mid-day anchor was reduced without explanation in 2017 and divvied up among less-qualified young women and men. Meanwhile, Kiernan received a newly formatted morning show and a "multi-million dollar state-of-the-art studio," the suit says.

"The level of attention and support provided to Mr. Kiernan was over-the-top compared to Ms. Torre, who was left to languish in an older, far less equipped studio, with much less support," the suit says.

When Torre asked NY1 news director Anthony Proia about the discrepancy he told her to “stop complaining,” the suit says.

The network also feted Kiernan with on-air tributes and a promotional campaign when he celebrated 20 years as morning anchor. When Torre celebrated 25 years of her own show, it received no such special promotion, the suit charges.

“NY1 decided to focus its promotional efforts on Mr. Kiernan rather than even give a ‘slice’ to Ms. Torre,” the complaint reads.

The suit seeks damages to be determined at trial, as well as an order placing the anchorwomen in positions they would have occupied had they not been discriminated against.

“We take these allegations seriously and as we complete our thorough review, we have not found any merit to them,” Charter spokeswoman Maureen Huff said. “NY1 is a respectful and fair workplace and we’re committed to providing a work environment in which all our employees are valued and empowered.”