

MetLife faces gender discrimination lawsuit

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A former senior vice president of MetLife is suing the insurer, as well as past and current top executives, over alleged gender discrimination.

Mona Moazzaz, who was with the firm until May 2019 and most recently served as chief administrative officer, pointed to “discriminatory pay practices, gender-based hostility, inappropriate discriminatory comments, and everything between” in the complaint filed in New York.

“Plaintiff seeks declaratory, injunctive, and equitable relief, as well as monetary damages, to redress defendants’ unlawful employment practices in violation of the Equal Pay Act, 29 U.S.C. §§ 206, et seq., the New York State Human Rights Law, N.Y. Executive Law §§ 290, et seq., the New York City Human Rights Law, N.Y.C. Admin. Code §§ 8-101, et seq., and the New York Equal Pay Law, New York Labor Law § 194,” reads the 27-page court document seen by *Insurance Business*.

Along with MetLife, also named as defendants are chief executive Michel Khalaf, former CEO Steven Kandarian, chief human resources officer (CHRO) Susan Podlogar, ex-CHRO Frans Hijkoop, and head of human resources for global technology and operations Gary Hediger.

According to the lawsuit, Moazzaz was paid substantially less than men who perform less or equal work at MetLife. She also claims to have been subjected to what was described as systemic gender discrimination – including being called a “bitch” – before being “unceremoniously” terminated without notice.

Represented by Wigdor LLP, the plaintiff is demanding a trial by jury.

Meanwhile a *Reuters* report quoted MetLife spokesperson Randy Clerihue as stating: “We believe the allegations are without merit and plan to defend this matter vigorously.”